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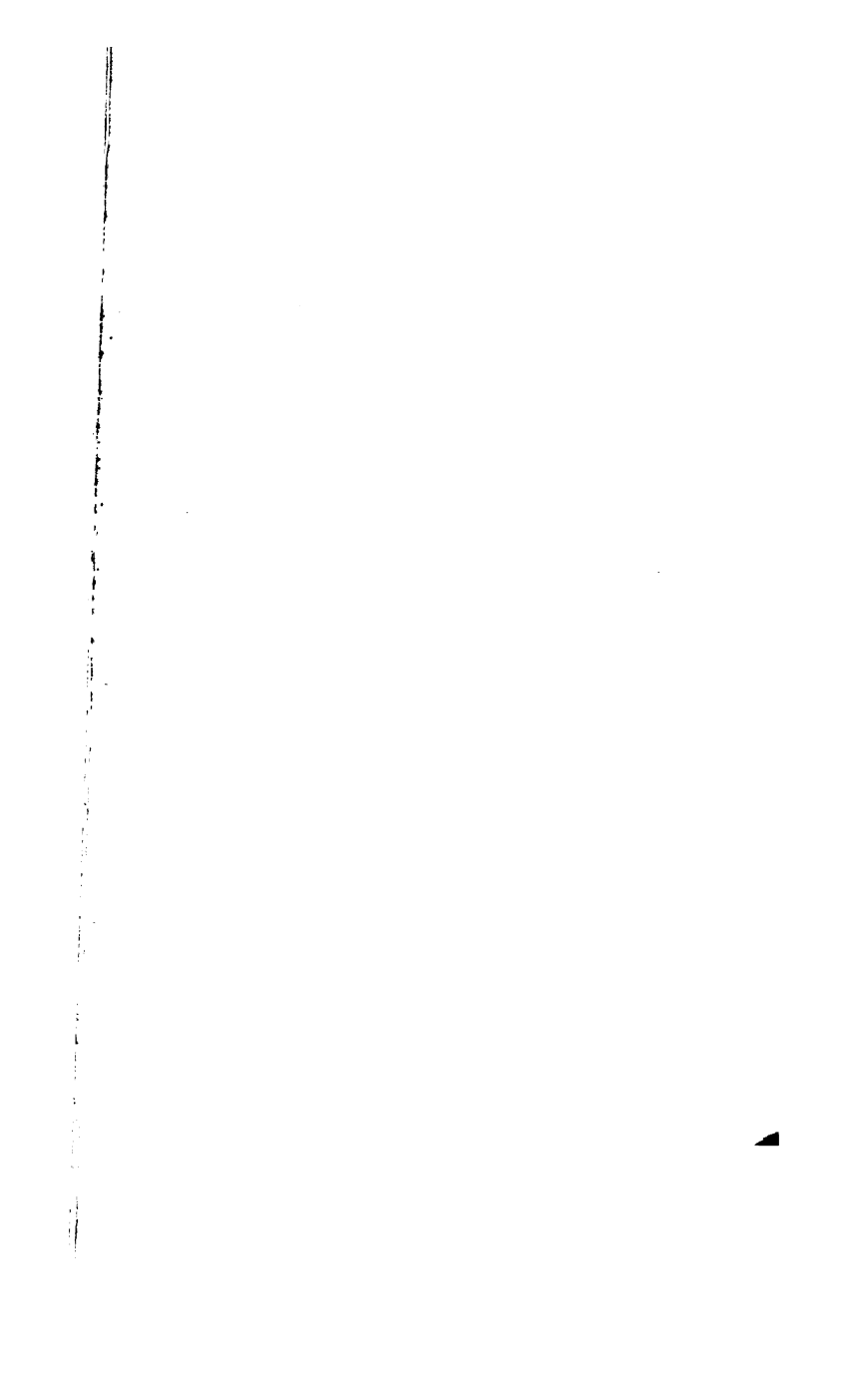
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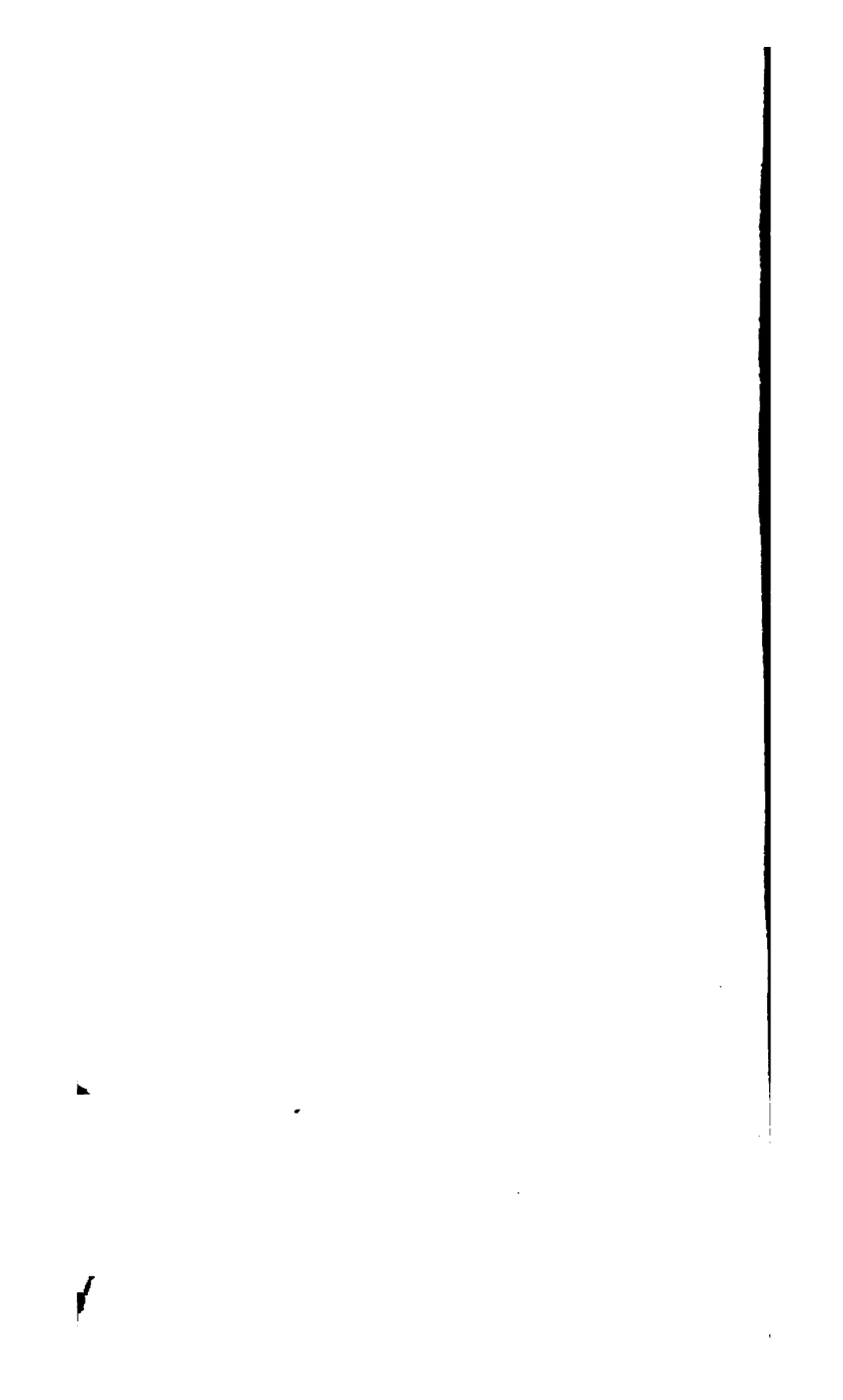
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Susanna Harvey Hein

INTERESTING
MEMOIRS.

By a Lady.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

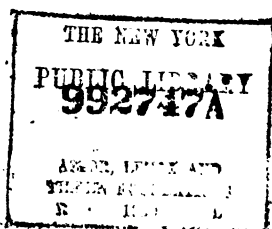
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NAS
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*Juvenile Literature - Fiction,
Scottish -*

THE

Author's Preface.

TAKING advantage of the prevailing rage for Novels, the vehicles by which the most fatal poison is often conveyed to the heart, I send these volumes into the world with the humane intention, perhaps presumptuous hope, of counteracting the effects of such productions, by inspiring my young readers with juster sentiments, and a more correct taste, than what is usually acquired by perusing books of mere amusement.

To beguile the remembrance of real and recent misfortunes, by relating a story, the incidents of which are partly fictitious, I have been insensibly led to compile this little work : But though the story is indebted to fancy, the reflections

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with which it is interspersed, are those of sentiment, and flow directly from the heart.

Should the friends in whom mine is most tenderly interested, reap either pleasure or improvement from this Work—should I, by means of it, inspire one virtuous aim, or cherish one pious sentiment in the minds of youth, I shall submit contentedly to the award of an impartial public with respect to its literary merit, of which I am not qualified to judge; but which, in my estimation, is comparatively of little importance.

EDINBURGH,
September 16, 1785.

INTERESTING MEMOIRS.



THE spirit of true valour which animated the heroes in the age of Louis XIV, was not confined to France. The contagious manners of a voluptuous monarch, and a licentious court, had not yet diffused themselves through the people of England ; and their ancient spirit seemed to revive, at the very moment when the rival powers of Europe required that England should take a decided part in their quarrels, in order to preserve that balance on which *their mutual safety depends*.

Adversity is often the parent of virtue. The domestic troubles in which that kingdom had lately been involved, not only gave a check to the progress of vice and luxury, but led men to think justly, which is the first step towards acting nobly.

Amongst those who, disgusted with the pursuit of pleasure, or indulgence of sloth, wished to distinguish themselves in the field of glory and fame, were the young Earl of Granville, and his friend Mr. Seymour.—The name of a Condé inspired them with an ardent ambition, not only to share in his glory, but to emulate his virtues. Accordingly, having no parents to control them, or combat what some would deem a romantic enthusiasm, they embarked for France ; reached the army

which was then encamped at Siennes, and introduced themselves to the Prince, as two young soldiers of fortune, who wished to fight under his banners, whilst opposing their common enemies.

It is needless to say that our young heroes suffered no opportunity to escape of signalizing themselves; and so successful were they in their various enterprizes, that at the peace of ——— Lord Granville was possessed of a Captain's, and Mr. Seymour of a Colonel's commission. The former returned to England, but the latter entered into the service of the Dutch.

Tired at length with the fatigues of war, Colonel Seymour determined to abandon them for a life of domestic quiet. He returned to his native country, which acquaintance with others had only served to endear. With part of his paternal fortune he purchased a retired and beautiful farm. He married an amiable woman, reflected on the various blessings he possessed, and resolved to be happy.

Habit, however, is often more powerful than principle. Accustomed to an active life, the powers of his mind languished for want of employment. His haughty and imperious temper, which he had been at no pains to subdue, having now no objects for its exercise, degenerated into peevishness, caprice, and discontent.

His gentle partner bore her share of this unequal yoke with patient submission. Perhaps, had she exerted a little more spirit, the demands made on her forbearance would neither have been so numerous, nor so frequent; but her soul was of that sensitive nature, which shrinks from the approach

of strife or unkindness ; and she resolved quietly to bear, what she had neither strength to oppose, nor skill to remedy.

Colonel Seymour was determined in the choice of his residence, from its vicinity to the Castle of Hastings ; the seat of his ancient friend Lord Granville, who was in truth one of the most respectable characters of that age. He had early imbibed those just notions of honour, that fortitude, magnanimity, and love of true glory, and all those exalted virtues which were displayed in the conduct of a Villeroy, a Condé, and a Turenne. But, along with these, he had cherished also the gentler virtues of the heart : The former serve to recommend us to the esteem of others ; but it is from the latter we must derive our self-enjoyment.

With all these advantages, the character of Lord Granville was strongly marked by ambition and high notions of birth. Conscious of having deserved the favour of his sovereign, his claims, perhaps, bore a juster proportion to his deserts than to the power of his master ; whose profusion and love of pleasure deprived him of the means of rewarding merit, by leading him to bestow his favours chiefly on those who contributed at once to his enjoyment and his infamy.

Disgusted with the court, the manners of which incurred both his hatred and contempt, he retired to the seat of his ancestors, where, following the natural bias of his exalted mind, he strove to promote the happiness, as he had formerly done the glory, of his country.

He married his cousin, Lady Louisa Howard ; who, by the prudence of her mother, had been

sheltered in the quiet of retirement from the general contagion ; that lady choosing rather, by living in the country, to deprive her daughter of the high polish of a court, than to stain the purity of her mind, by exposing her to its corrupting manners and example.

A year after their marriage, Lord Granville's happiness received a greater addition than he thought it could admit of, by the birth of a son ; and before other two expired, his lady presented him likewise with a daughter. But the last only survived long enough to make her excellent parents experience the whole bitterness of sorrow ; by giving early proofs of talents fitted to adorn a public station, and virtues to endear a domestic character.

The strictest intimacy had subsisted in early life, between Lady Granville and Mrs. Seymour, whose education had been carried on together under the inspection of Lady Howard. And though neither of these young ladies possessed that sanguine temper and lively imagination, which give birth to the enthusiasm of friendship, they felt for each other that settled esteem, and complacency which often forms the most lasting attachments.

Theirs was afterwards strengthened and confirmed by constant intercourse between the two families, and acquired a peculiar tenderness from their mutual distresses : For it is certain, those amicable connections are ever the most lasting, which take their rise from mutual dependence and sympathy.

In the kind and gentle bosom of Mrs. Seymour, Lady Granville reposed that tender sorrow which

the loss of her daughter occasioned, and which the fear of increasing the distress of a husband she fondly loved, made her repress in his presence.

The sufferings of Mrs. Seymour from the constant bad humour of the Colonel, were of a very different nature; and though they could not be concealed from the observation of her friend, yet so secret did she hold the weakness of a character, with which she was so nearly connected, that she never mentioned them, but with a view to palliate what she vainly endeavoured to hide, and never could hope to amend.

The temper of Colonel Seymour, however, seemed sensibly changed; by an event equally agreeable and unexpected. After having been several years married without children, Mrs. Seymour was delivered of a fine girl, who awakened in the bosom of her father sensations the most tender and delightful; and agreeably employed his mind in forming schemes for her future education and improvement.

The birth of this child was considered by Lady Granville as the happiest circumstance that could befall her friend; nor did it seem of much less consequence to herself. The young Lord Hastings having been sent about this time on a visit to his grandmother, Lady Granville felt, that the death of her daughter, and absence of her son, was a trial too great for her weak spirits to support: Heaven seemed to have sent this child to supply, in some measure, the void thus left in her heart. She visited Springwood every day, and never failed to caress the sweet innocent with all a mother's fondness. Mrs. Seymour, well knowing the attachment Lady

Granville had to the name of Louisa, which her lamented child had borne, requested her to become godmother to the little stranger, and to allow it to be christened by that name.

"I receive with gratitude this instance of your delicate attention," replied Lady Granville; "but, indeed, my beloved friend, though I accept the name, you must pardon me for declining the office of godmother. An oath is of too sacred a nature to be unnecessarily undertaken; the parents are certainly the most proper sponsors for their children: I have never asked any person to stand for mine, because I think this not only an useless ceremony, but, with the generality of the world, a criminal profanation of a most sacred engagement."

For some time the lovely Louisa seemed to restore peace and even cheerfulness to the bosom of her parents.

Their fondness for her was great, but it was justified by the beauty and sweetness of their little darling. Her time was divided between them and Lord and Lady Granville, whose affection for her seemed almost equal to that which nature inspires.

Her education, during the first years of her life, agreeably occupied those hours which used to hang heavy on the hands of her fond father; and he afterwards continued to superintend himself her progress in those branches which required the aid of superior masters. In the midst of these agreeable occupations, however, the family at Springwood received a shock, which being alike unfortunate and unforeseen, produced the most fatal consequences.

The Colonel's fortune, consisting of fifteen thousand pounds, he was advised to secure in the funds ; and for that purpose had collected and placed it in the hands of an eminent broker, who was to have transacted the business the very day on which he died. His affairs were found in the greatest confusion ; and after every attempt to assert his just claims, the Colonel could only recover three of the fifteen thousand.

This blow, to a man advanced in years, chagrined in temper, and declining in health, was indeed a dreadful one. The Colonel was neither possessed of that philosophy which teaches us to bear patiently what we cannot escape, nor soothed with that religion which palliates the bitterness of disappointed hope with the assurance of certain felicity.

To a person about to quit life, one would think the goods of fortune would seem trivial and insignificant ; but the mind grasps at those objects in which it has long delighted, and feels its fondness for them increase, by the near prospect of a separation.

The Colonel strove to brave the storm, and support this stroke with the resolution of a soldier. The hardy oak proudly opposes the whole fury of the elements, and is scorched by the lightning, or overthrown by the tempest ; whilst the humble willow, by gently yielding to its force, preserves secure its unenvied station. Such were the different tempers with which the Colonel and his amiable wife encountered adversity, and such too were the different effects produced by it.—Colonel Seymour did not long lament his loss of fortune ; a sudden stroke of the palsy put a period to that life, which was already wearing towards its close.

Though the distress and constant inquietude which his caprice and ill-humour had inflicted on his gentle partner, were now no more; yet after his death, she experienced pangs a thousand times more severe than any his harshness had occasioned. In the grave of a friend we bury all his foibles; there we sacrifice our little disgusts and resentments: Time, whilst it throws a sacred veil over his errors, serves also greatly to magnify his virtues. We remember them without those shades which the imperfections of human nature had mingled with them,—we feel our irreparable loss,—we deplore it,—and the tenderness of melancholy, uniting with the admiration of virtue, gives birth to a sentiment too exquisite to be defined; and which, by constantly accompanying the idea of our departed friend, renders our mournful recollection of past pleasures often more delightful than the enjoyment of such as are present.

At leisure to reflect on the various situations and infirm health of Colonel Seymour, his afflicted wife found a thousand reasons to excuse; and even justify his capricious temper. A thousand proofs of his tenderness rushed on her mind; and she accused herself continually of having been impatient under the one and ungrateful for the other. Unhappy effect of an excess of the most amiable virtues, humility and ingenuity!

The friendship of Lady Granville sustained at this trying juncture the feebleness of her mind, and aided the efforts of her reason, to dispel the cloud with which grief had enveloped it. Her heart found its chief consolation in the innocent endearments and watchful attentions of her charming daughter,

who was now become the only source of her comfort, the only object of her care.

The singular beauty of her person, whilst it flattered the vanity of a mother, awakened in her bosom a variety of apprehensions. She never regretted the loss of fortune on her own account ; but when she considered the dangers and mortifications to which it would subject her child, accustomed to associate with people in a superior rank, and educated with the prospect of an independent fortune, her heart died within her ; nor was this the chief source of her inquietude. She early discovered in Louisa, that refined and ingenuous sensibility, which would at once expose her to the most exquisite sufferings, and incapacitate her for supporting them.

The various anxieties that preyed on her mind, enfeebled her body, and impaired her health with terror and anguish. Louisa saw her daily declining. Afraid to awaken those apprehensions in the bosom of her mother, which she could no longer banish from her own, she communicated her fears to her sympathising friend Lady Granville ; who, on pretence of a call in passing, brought an eminent physician to visit Mrs. Seymour. He made no scruple to pronounce her in danger of a decline, and advised immediate change of climate as the only possible means of prolonging her life.

It was a necessary, but painful office, to communicate this information to Mrs. Seymour. Lady Granville did so in the most cautious manner.—“Think not, my watchful friend,” replied she, “that I am either ignorant of my malady, or shocked with my danger. Death has for some time

been familiar to my thoughts, and, as far as was allowable, the object of my wishes. That I have hitherto been silent on this subject, proceeded entirely from aversion to give you pain, and to afflict my beloved child, whose heart, alas ! is but too sensible to every distress of her mother's.

“ If we must part, to you I confide my treasure ; on you I rely for supplying her loss, and even teaching her how to forget it, by your generous, constant friendship.”

Lady Granville was deeply affected by this conversation, and after the most solemn assurances of fidelity to the trust reposed in her, urged Mrs. Seymour, in the strongest terms, to consent to going abroad without delay. She opposed her arguments with a variety of pleas ; at last, looking tenderly at her friend, and pausing for a moment, “ Why, why, my dearest Lady Granville, should you be thus anxious to preserve a life, which is evidently hastening to a period ; and which I cannot even prolong, but at an expence which my little fortune can ill support. You know the whole amount of Colonel Seymour's effects does not exceed three thousand pounds ; a sum by no means adequate to the expensive education of Louisa, and which, if I cannot increase by my œconomy, I will at least never diminish in the way of a doubtful experiment. With me, indeed, its effects are not doubtful, since I am convinced by my feelings, that I never can recover.”

Lady Granville ceased to urge her friend ; but on her returning home, wrote her the following letter, inclosing a draught on her banker for a thousand pounds.

To Mrs. Seymour.

"I TRUST my dear Mrs. Seymour is not to learn, that the only advantage which wealth can confer on her friend, is the power of bestowing it on others. I never knew till now the value of money; much, indeed, shall I feel myself indebted to Providence, if it can in the smallest degree contribute to your health or enjoyment.

"I will not injure your friendship, by supposing that you will refuse this small testimony of mine; but should you feel the slightest hesitation about accepting it, think for a moment what you would suffer, if you saw me in distress which you could alleviate, but which a false and cruel delicacy on my part opposed, and rendered impracticable. Make this appeal to your own ingenuous heart, and I will trust my cause to its decision.

"I ever am, with confirmed esteem, and tender affection,

Yours,

LOUISA GRANVILLE."

To Lady Granville.

"DID I stand in need of proofs of the most generous and constant attachment, the letter before me would supply incontestible evidence of yours.

"With a mind weakened by disease, I dare hardly trust to the appeal you require. Something within this bosom, whether pride or delicacy I know

not, revolts at the idea of receiving a gift of this nature, which it is utterly impossible I can ever repay. But, from whatever principle these feelings are derived, I shall readily sacrifice them to the certainty of giving you pleasure, and the hope of proving myself worthy of the greatest of all blessings, your esteem and approbation.

"These have long constituted the chief enjoyment of

Your devoted friend,

ELIZA SEYMOUR."

To Lady Granville.

"MY mother has just informed me of the letter you have sent her. O Lady Granville! O my dear second parent! how can I restrain my gratitude, my admiration of your goodness, or rather how can I express it? Your noble generosity quite overpowers my heart. This gift to my mother, so surprising, so unexpected—but why do I talk in this manner? Is there any thing great or good, that is not familiar to Lady Granville? Dearest Madam! I can only thank you with my tears; but do not restrain them; they are accompanied with a feeling so delightful, that I would rather weep with you than rejoice with all the world. Could envy find a place in the bosom of her whom you honour with your friendship, I should certainly envy you your present feelings. But I can truly say, had I the power, I should know no delight equal to that of obliging you.

"Perhaps it may prove that I am not altogether unworthy of your goodness, when I declare, that

though yours inspires me with equal pleasure and gratitude, you are the only person in the world from whom I could receive such an obligation, without feeling sensible pain. May I never forfeit your esteem, or forget your goodness ; and may you, dear Madam, long live to fulfil the benevolent purposes of your heart ; where, I trust, you will ever find a place for your much obliged, obedient, and grateful

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

It being now the month of September, there was no time to lose in making preparations for the departure of Mrs. Seymour and her daughter. About this time, Lord and Lady Granville received the most lively satisfaction by the return of Lord Hastings from an academy where he had spent the last six years. The master of it, having long officiated as chaplain in the *regiment commanded by Colonel Seymour*, had recommended himself to the esteem of all the officers, by his good sense, liberal sentiments, and unaffected piety ; and by his unassuming manners and strict regard to his duty, was revered even by those who lived in the constant violation of theirs—Such is the power of real goodness !

The advantages to be reaped from such an instructor, were too many, not to over balance, in minds like Lord and Lady Granville's, the natural desire of having their only son placed near them. And as Dr. Melville complained, that the frequent avocations, occasioned by the holidays, had a bad effect in dissipating the minds of his young pupils, and giving them habits of inattention, his fond parents sacrificed their indulgence to his improvement, and never brought him home but at Christmas.

B. 2.

Nine months had elapsed since his last visit at the castle, and the change which that time had produced on his person, was remarked with admiration by all its inhabitants.

He had just reached his twenty-second year ; a period, when young men of rank too often appear in a disagreeable light, either from the rude indifference or affected petulance of their manners. Equally remote from the clown and the coxcomb, Lord Hastings appeared with that modesty and reserve which agreed so well with the dignity of his aspect, and singular elegance of his person, that it was as impossible to behold him without complacency, as to listen to him without admiration. His fine intelligent eyes convinced one before he spoke, that one had every thing noble to expect from the mind that informed them ; and as their expression varied with every varying sentiment, the feeling heart took an immediate interest in their language.

It is highly flattering to our self-love, to find our first impressions confirmed. The character of Lord Hastings did more than fulfil the agreeable prefaces to which the first sight of his person gave birth.

It was impossible that two young people, so perfectly amiable as Miss Seymour and Lord Hastings, could behold each other with indifference ; but, wholly unaccustomed to the society of women, he felt himself embarrassed in her presence ; and from a sort of secret consciousness, appeared deficient even in such little attentions as politeness teaches those who do not feel their propriety ; but which his natural sensibility and good taste would certainly

have led him to pay any other woman. The admiration her beauty excited was a sentiment wholly new and delightful ; but his heart was in no danger from any other, as the opportunities of seeing Miss Seymour seldom occurred ; and her attention was so entirely engrossed by her mother, that she scarcely ever spent an hour at the castle.

Every thing being adjusted for their departure, Mrs. Seymour and her charming daughter took a very tender leave of Lord and Lady Granville. Lord Hastings was present at this interview, and felt himself deeply affected by the behaviour of Louisa ; who, on embracing her benefactors, seemed wholly to forget that there were any witnesses of her emotions, and bursting into tears, with much difficulty articulated these words : " Oh Lady Granville ! what do I not owe you ?—Perhaps the life of my beloved parent !—But heaven will reward you,—I never, never can."

Lord Hastings presented her his hand ; her's trembled exceedingly from the agitation of her mind. He conveyed her to the chaise, in which her mother waited for her ; he wished Mrs. Seymour every advantage she could possibly desire from her journey ; he would have said something to Louisa, but the sight of her lovely face, bedewed with tears, deprived him of utterance. He had time only to bid her adieu ; the chaise drove off, and left him in a state of mind equally new and agitating ; the cause of which he did not discover, because, perhaps, he was at no pains to inquire.

On his entering the parlour, the conversation naturally turned on the travellers. Both Lord and

Lady Granville joined in the highest encomiums on the character of Mrs. Seymour, and the singular beauty and sweetness of her daughter ; whose filial piety Lady Granville praised, with the enthusiasm of a friend, and the fondness of a mother.

The speech Louisa had made at parting dwelt on the mind of Lord Hastings ; and no sooner did his father leave the room, than he eagerly demanded an explanation of it from Lady Granville.

She hesitated a few moments, and then taking out of her pocket the two letters she had received a fortnight before—"The occasion of these, my dear Henry," said she, "was my sending a draught to my valuable friend, to defray the expense of a journey, which she would not undertake, for fear of encroaching too far on her daughter's slender fortune.—Heaven grant this journey success !"

Lord Hastings read the letters with the most earnest attention ; on finishing that from Louisa, he arose with visible emotion, returned them to his mother, and grasping her hand, which he pressed to his lips, he looked at her for some moments with eyes that spoke both love, gratitude, and admiration ; then, heaving a sigh, he exclaimed,—“Oh may I never, never give pain to a soul so tender, so generous as yours !” and hastily quitted the room.

He retired to his own apartment, and full of the scenes which had just passed, took up his pen, and addressed his friend Mr. Beaufort, with whom he had long been accustomed to share every thought ; and who had gone lately to the university at Cambridge, whither he was soon to follow :—

To Mr. Beaufort.

"AS I can never enjoy any satisfaction in which my dear Beaufort does not partake, I hasten to tell you, that the tenderness with which I am treated by the best of parents, makes me almost forget the absence of my friend. Often have we admired together, the great, the awful virtues of a Cato, a Brutus, and a Fabius : but with what superior delight do I contemplate those of a mild, gentle, domestic nature, which are daily displayed at the castle of Hastings ! With what reverence do I behold the generosity, with what gratitude feel the affection of Lord and Lady Granville ; who, forgetting the authority of parents, condescend to treat me with the confidence and familiarity of friends.

"Upon my arrival here, I was introduced by my mother to her most intimate friend, the widow of Colonel Seymour ; and her daughter, a beautiful girl about seventeen. The former appears to be sensible, modest, and agreeable, but in a very declining state of health, I would attempt a description of the latter, but am aware of your raillery. I will confess, however, I never saw so interesting a countenance, or so much beauty joined with such engaging simplicity. For the last quality, she is probably indebted to her retired manner of life, which has been spent here at a sweet romantic farm called Springwood, purchased by Colonel Seymour, on account of its nearness to the castle ; he and my father having been intimately acquainted when abroad.

"These ladies are just set out on a visit to the continent, as change of climate is thought essentially necessary for poor Mrs. Seymour.

"With much pleasure should I have accompanied them, but my father wishes me to spend one year at Cambridge, in the midst of my friends, before setting out on my travels. Adieu."

To the same

"YOU rally me, Beaufort, as I foresaw would be the case ; you even pronounce me downrightly in love, and affirm, that my wound is already too deep to bear being probed : You tell me that consciousness alone could make me fear the raillery of my friend, and that it would have been more natural at twenty-two to have launched out in the praise of a young beauty, than to harangue on the virtues of an old father and mother.

"Well ; enjoy your fancied penetration : to dispute your opinion, I plainly perceive, would be to confirm you in error. Yet spite of your malice, I would attempt a description of this charming girl, were I not conscious that I am utterly incapable of doing justice either to her mind or person.

"Brought up at a distance from the gay world, she blends the modesty of innocence with the ease of politeness ; she is a stranger to its customs ; but from the readiness of her apprehension, the elegance of her manners, and the warmth of her heart, appears only to be ignorant of its vices and follies.

“The delicacy of her form, agrees with that of her mind ; I fear she possesses too great a share of that sensibility, which, though the source of our most exquisite enjoyments, often too occasions our most lasting inquietudes ; by exposing us to danger from every quarter, and rendering us vulnerable on every side. To be serious, Beaufort, I should reckon an attachment to Miss Seymour a very real misfortune. She seems perfectly amiable, and qualified to adorn any station ; but you are no stranger to the high spirit of my father, and cannot doubt that he would greatly disapprove of his only son entertaining a serious passion for the daughter of a private gentleman, with scarce any other patrimony than the liberal education he has bestowed on her.

“I am extremely concerned for the situation of poor Talbot ; his misfortunes will not be the less severely felt, for being the consequence of his own folly.

“Poor fellow ! he has many good qualities ; but a certain pliancy of disposition, joined to an intemperate love of pleasure, is his ruin. Could you wean him from the worst of all vices, gaming, I should still have hopes of his reformation ; but that I fear is impossible. Take what method you judge most proper of conveying the inclosed to him ; do not mention my name ; but, if possible, prevent its being lavished on villains and sharpers.

“I shall be with you on Tuesday ; till then adieu.

HASTINGS.”

To Lord Hastings, at Cambridge.

"I AM pleased, my dear Henry, by my promise to you, to be under the necessity of indulging myself. You may be assured no employment can be half so agreeable as that by which my son may reap either pleasure or improvement.

"It was with peculiar satisfaction I remarked during your last visit, that your studies had not been confined to what was only elegant and entertaining, but that you had made science rather than literature the object of your pursuit.

"The possessors of the former are ever modest and reserved; those of the latter are generally proud and loquacious. The sphere of real knowledge is very narrow, but the immensity of space lies open to hypothesis, the favourite business of literature.

"The extent of her domain renders her insolent, and the deference paid to her opinions teaches her to over-rate her powers. The case is quite different with science. Not content with the information of others, she explores truth by the help of her own eyes; but conscious that these are liable to deception, and take in only a very limited prospect, she is afraid to pronounce dogmatically on any question. She never impiously attempts to pass the boundaries which have been assigned her by Heaven, and is ever more ready to assume the character of the pupil than the preceptor.

"Good taste, my dear Henry, is a powerful co-adjutor to reason in the conduct of life. The per-

ception of moral beauty is much akin to that of natural ; and a mind capable of receiving vivid impressions of the latter, will easily feel the influence of the former. Strive then to cultivate the love of every thing great, sublime, and beautiful, whether in the natural or moral world ; you will find this a powerful preservative against those dangers to which your youth, rank, and fortune peculiarly expose you. Unhappily they attack us most powerfully at that period, when we have neither strength to resist, nor skill to elude their force ; but good taste, uniting with good principles, will enable you to stand your ground, and even baffle all the arts of seduction. Farewell. To preserve you virtuous, in order to render you happy, is the constant aim of your affectionate father.

GRANVILLE."

To the same.

"CASTLE HASTINGS.

"I SEND my dear Henry the draught he desires, but have doubled the sum, that he may be under no temptation to repress one wish of his generous heart.

"Polished, or, in other words, luxurious nations, are peculiarly favourable to the growth of self-love ; there, individuals feel so many wants, that their attention is chiefly engrossed by private concerns. Hence it arises, that men acquire an extraordinary importance in their own eyes, and center all their views in the single point of selfish gratification.

"But though I hope you will ever find your highest enjoyment in the exercise of benevolence,

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yet let me warn you, not to be imposed on by those who are improper objects of your bounty. In this case, your intended charity not only deprives the virtuous poor of their claims, but proves an encouragement to vice and sloth. It is necessity, not choice, that incites the lower classes of mankind to action; and were the indigent secure of food and clothing from the opulent, there would be a final cessation of industry; and then what dreadful disorders would ensue?

“The desire of knowledge at your age is both natural and proper; but take care that your pursuit be properly directed. Metaphysical refinements and disquisitions, whilst they flatter the pride of man, mislead his judgment, and corrupt his heart; and whilst they deceive him with promises of superior light, steal from him insensibly those hopes and fears, which Omniscience has assigned as the great springs of human conduct; and plunge him at length in darkness and despair. Religion is the only sure basis of morality. Do not even its enemies confess this, when they term it a political engine? In truth, human society cannot subsist without the aid of religion; and the wisest legislators have acknowledged, that it was safer for the populace to have a fabulous creed, than none at all.

“Make religion then, my dear Henry, a subject of attentive inquiry; but always remember it is its evidence, not its doctrines, of which you are to constitute reason the judge. Whatever is derived from a Being of infinite wisdom must be supposed to contain many things above human comprehension. The path of duty is plain; be that your chief study.

"Your mother had a letter yesterday from Mrs. Seymour, who has borne the journey to Dover pretty well. She and her amiable daughter present their compliments to you. Adieu.

GRANVILLE."

To the same.

"CASTLE HASTINGS.

"I HAVE just been examining, with attention, the absurd and monstrous opinions entertained by the heathen world, of the nature and attributes of the Deity, and confess myself shocked beyond expression, at human weakness and error. Where was that reason which philosophers proudly boasted as an infallible guide in their researches after truth, when they adopted notions so repugnant to her dictates ?

"I am persuaded, we who are enlightened by revelation are very incompetent judges of the extent of unassisted reason ; and often attribute to her natural force, what is the effect of supernatural illumination. Some trifling critics have condemned the ancient poets for ascribing the victories of their heroes to the interposition of their gods. "What merit," say they, "is there in obtaining a conquest by the assistance of Jove ?" Homer has had juster notions of the importance of divine aid, than many who call themselves Christians. He saw that it was absolutely necessary to the performance of any great or good action.

"The study of *history* I would particularly recommend to my dear Henry. It presents a wide field, in which you may collect a variety of mate-

rials, highly useful for the conduct of life: It has likewise the strongest tendency to exalt our ideas of the Divine Government, by displaying to us the Supreme Disposer of all events, educing good from evil, order from confusion, and rendering the deepest laid plans of treachery and violence, not only subversive of the ends proposed, but evidently conducive to the contrary.

"There, too, you will discover the superior excellency of Christianity wherever it has had its full effect. Its internal evidence, and natural tendency, is what I would chiefly have you to consider. In truth, my son, however abused by the weakness or wickedness of mankind, the Christian scheme is undubitably the only one worthy of its great Author. Adopt its principles, cherish its hopes, rely on its promises; they will give dignity and consistency to your character. Frequently contrast that of a man who joins piety to God, with benevolence to men, and maintains his integrity through life, with that of the boasting infidel so strikingly described in these words:

Vois tu ce Libertin en public intrepide
Qui preche contre un Dieu que dans son ame il croit;
Il iroit embrasser la verite qu'il voit,
Mais des ses faux amis il craint la raillerie,
Et ne brave ainsi Dieu que par poltronnerie.

"To apologize to you for being serious, would be to affront your judgment, and injure that esteem and confidence, with which I am your sincere friend, as well as your affectionate father.

GRANVILLE.

Mrs. Seymour and her daughter reached Dover without any cross accident. While they waited for the packet, a coach drove into the yard, the liveries of which Mrs. Seymour instantly recollected to belong to the Honourable Mr. Stanhope, with whose family she had become acquainted, while on a visit at London. He was possessed of an ample fortune, but had the affliction to see his son in so alarming a state of health after a fall from his horse, that, by advice of his physicians, Mr. and Mrs. Stanhope were resolved to carry him abroad to try the effect of a warmer climate.

Few things could have proved more fortunate and agreeable to the two families, than this rencounter of their immediately joined companies; the anxieties of Mrs. Stanhope's mind were considerably alleviated by communicating them to her sensible friend; and the languor inseparable from bad health, awakened in the compassionate bosom of Louisa a degree of solicitude to amuse young Mr. Stanhope, which often made him forget that he had any cause of complaint.

They arrived at Paris at a time when travellers would have found objects sufficient to gratify both taste and curiosity; but, health being the sole end of their pursuit, they declined accepting the many polite invitations they received from people of the first fashion, to whom they had brought letters of recommendation. In consequence of one of these the Marchioness de St. Croix waited on Mrs. Seymour, and urged her in such strong, yet polite terms to accompany her for a few days to her delightful villa on the borders of the forest of St. Germain, that it was impossible to refuse her request.

The Marchioness was a widow ; her family consisted of a son and three daughters, all of whom were educated in a manner suitable to their birth ; but their fortune being very small, as is customary in France, two of them were destined to the conventional life.

Adelaide, the youngest, who had been some time a boarder in the nunnery of St. Cire, was now on a visit to her mother, before entering on her noviciate there. She was about two years older than Miss Seymour ; alike amiable and engaging, though not possessed of such regular beauty. When these two ladies met, the impression they made on each other was too strong ever to be erased. Philosophers tell us, when kindred souls come within the sphere of each other's influence, they as naturally attract and are attracted by each other, as homogeneous bodies.

An air of melancholy, spread over the soft features of Adelaide, sensibly touched the heart of Louisa, which vibrated to every expression of tenderness.

Strangers to suspicion or disguise, the unhappy fruits of commerce with the world, their friendship commenced at first sight.

In forming an amicable connection, there is no need of laying down rules, or specifying the duties incumbent on the several parties. The soul which is capable of that exalted union, will itself suggest every sentiment, and lead to every action, which real friendship involves in it.

During her residence at the Villa de St. Croix, Mrs. Seymour was so much recruited, that she sometimes prevailed with her daughter to accompany the Marchioness to Paris, in order to share in the public amusements. But how insipid to her were the most brilliant assemblies, in which her heart took no interest, compared with those placid hours which she spent with her favourite Adelaide in the country ! Indeed, the hurry and bustle of public life only serve, with persons of her character, more to endear the quiet of retirement.

She returned to St. Germain, with a double relish for its peaceful shades and innocent amusements ; and looked back with pity on those who pursue pleasure with such eagerness, that they generally run it down in the chase.

Mrs. Seymour received a letter from Mrs. Stanhope, informing her of her resolution of spending the remainder of the winter at Montpellier, and entreating her to accompany her thither. The heart of Louisa was divided on this occasion ; as her mother was sensibly better, she was strongly tempted to yield to the solicitations of her gentle friend, who urged her to spend some time with her in the convent before the awful ceremony of her admission.

As there were some branches of education, particularly music, in which Louisa required still further instructions, Mrs. Seymour joined her entreaties with those of Adelaide ; and at last persuaded her dutious and affectionate child to commit her, for a short time, to the care of Mr. and Mrs. Stanhope, and return with Adelaide to St. Cir.

By an application to the respectable founders of this noble institution, Miss Seymour was admitted there as a boarder ; though, not being of the noblesse, this was an infringement of the established rules ; but that convent being then in its infancy, engaged Madame Maintenon to dispense with them on this occasion.

She was greatly struck with the first view of this noble edifice, and the magnificent park of Versailles, in which it is situated ; but her walks were chiefly confined to the gardens, where alone she could enjoy the society of her beloved friend.

The melancholy which Louisa had formerly remarked in Adelaide, seemed to increase every day ; and was become so habitual, that she could not help suspecting it arose from dislike to the manner of life on which she was about to enter.

She questioned her with much earnestness on the subject ; and conjured her, by their mutual friendship, to lay open her heart to her without reserve ; to receive the consolation of her sympathy, and confide in her inviolable attachment.

Adelaide appeared so much affected during this discourse, that Louisa began to repent having introduced it. At length, bursting into tears, " O, my Louisa ! cried she, why should I longer strive to conceal from you the sorrow that preys upon my heart ! Yes, my friend, I am indeed unhappy, but not from the cause you imagine.

" You have a claim to my utmost confidence ; and believe me, the only reason for withholding it,

has been a regard to your ease and honour. I feared lest my mother should have questioned you on a subject, which would have forced you either to have sacrificed your own ingenuity, or the peace of your friend.

“ You have heard my brother mention the name of Grammont, with those encomiums which are due to his merit. Before joining his regiment, in which he holds only the rank of a captain, he came to spend some weeks with my brother at St. Germain. Prepared to admire his talents by the enthusiastic praises of his friend, I soon learnt also to love his virtues by acquaintance with himself. Oh, Louisa ! what science is so easily acquired as that of admiring merit ; what transition is so natural as from admiring to loving it ?

“ But I will not tire you with a repetition of the various circumstances which confirmed my opinion of Grammont's uncommon virtues ; suffice it to say, that I revered them in my heart, which could not withhold its most tender affection from a man, who solicited, with timid modesty, that esteem he had a right to claim, and implored my forgiveness for presuming to love me ; a fault which my own experience proved to be involuntary, my own feelings taught me to excuse.

“ For some time we were so intoxicated with the delightful indulgence of our mutual tenderness, that we forgot the obstacles which opposed our union. I am convinced, Louisa, the world affords not a happiness equal to that of indulging a tender, reciprocal affection, founded in virtue, approved by reason, endeared by confidence and secured by delicacy.

There is even a peculiar charm connected with the secret possession of joys, that are not common.—Our youth, want of fortune, and the life to which I was destined, were obstacles in the eye of reason; which were altogether insurmountable ; but,

Love bids us hope, where Reason bids despair ;—)

and either from a natural activity, or conscious elevation of mind, we take pleasure in conquering difficulties in the attainment of our favourite pursuits.

“The time for joining his regiment drew near. Already the King’s troops had taken the field, and those of the Marshal invested the fortress of ———. What a separation for two hearts that so greatly loved and feared as ours did ! The evening before his departure, Grammont prevailed on me to meet him in the garden, at an hour when the rest of the family were engaged with cards and music, that our parting might be without witnesses.—Oh, Louisa ! shall I ever forget that hour ? How often, when sitting in the arbour that borders the canal, have you chid me for my pensive looks and wandering, incoherent expressions ! Ah, my friend ! you know not the tender recollections that then overpowered my soul. Alas ! at this moment I am almost tempted to wish I had never known him who occasioned them.

“After a thousand protestations of inviolable affection and fidelity, a thousand adieus, interrupted by our sighs, and prolonged by our apprehensions, Grammont, dropping on his knees, and holding both my hands, which he bathed with his tears, pronounced this solemn farewell : “Almighty God !

the protector of virtue and innocence, protect and bless my Adelaide ; and grant that the stroke of death alone may divide two hearts, which from this moment are eternally devoted to each other." He arose, clasped me to his bosom, which seemed bursting with the violence of his emotions, and hastily withdrew.

" There was no need for pretending indisposition, in order to account for my retiring to my apartment ; I was indeed violently ill for some hours. In the morning, however, I arose about the time I supposed Grammont would set out. From the window of my dressing-room there was a view of the court-yard. He had once seen me there, on occasion of looking at a beautiful horse which my brother had purchased, and was desirous to shew me. I leaned my aching head against the shutter, which I kept half closed for fear of observation : I had not stood long, before the servant appeared with the horses ; Grammont followed slowly, pale and dejected, with his eyes fixed on the ground ; when suddenly recollecting himself, he stopt, and waving his hand for the servant to go on, he turned towards the window. I ventured to open the shutter ; he instantly perceived me ; a blush overspread his pale cheeks, and clasping his hands together, he raised his fine eyes to heaven ; then, turning them on me with a look.....O, Louisa ! that had something I fear of prophetic sadness in it ; gave a deep sigh, flew to the gate, mounted his horse, and disappeared in a moment.

" Pardon, my friend, this minute detail of circumstances, the recollection of which supports my weak spirits, and forms all my enjoyment.

"For three months Grammont contrived to write to me almost every post. How soothing, how delightful is that secret intercourse, to which an attachment like ours gives birth ! The whole creation, animate and inanimate, seems subservient to the happiness of those whose hearts love hath joined, but whose hands fortune hath put asunder.

"Averse to entrust our secret with a third person, and resolved never to require from any of my domestics, for my convenience, a violation of that duty which they might plead my example for sacrificing to their own, I made Grammont address his letters under cover to a young lady in the convent ; from whence I received them without incurring suspicion, as I corresponded with several of the boarders.

"Ah, my Louisa ! how tender, how sensible, how pathetic, is the language they breathe ! But you shall judge for yourself. The two last, which I received about a month before leaving St. Germain, I have now in my pocket : Judge of the happiness they afforded me ; and oh ! tell me, what am I to think of the dreadful silence by which it has been succeeded ?

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

"HOW little, my charming Adelaide, do they know of the tender tie which binds our very souls in one, who dread absence as injurious to the ardor and delicacy of real love ! Ours has been but short, yet it has proved, that the right I derive from affection to the undivided heart of the most amiable of

women, is still stronger than I could have believed. It has convinced me more than ever, that I love you—O Adelaide ! that I love you with a fondness, an admiration, an unremitting constancy, which no words can express. Surely, nothing should disturb me, whilst I read assurances of your happiness, and the most enchanting expressions of your affection ; yet, oh, my Adelaide ! my heart is a prey to numberless anxieties. The distance that divides us, my dangerous situation, our circumstances—yet let me not cruelly add my inquietudes to those of my gentle love. Hope is the sweetest as well as the most salutary ingredient in the cup of life. Let us cherish hope.

“ Let us trust, that the beneficent Author of our being, who hath conducted us to each other, and blended our fates in that delightful union in which our chief happiness consists, will continue our present felicity, till that period arrive, when age shall ripen both of us for an unreluctant passage into that world, where love, secure against all apprehension, is indulged without measure and without fear.

“ The time I employ in reading your letters seems the only valuable portions of my existence. Write to me then, my beloved Adelaide, every little plan you form, and every incident that occurs in the execution of it. Think nothing, that regards you, too trivial for me. It will gratify me in a thousand ways ; particularly by assisting that constant propensity of my imagination to accompany you in every situation. The heavenly bodies are now the only objects which we can behold at the same time ; they are vehicles of a kind of silent intercourse between those who sigh at a distance from each other. Look up, and

remember me at the hour of nine, the last we spent together. I will not fail, at the same hour, to think of my Adelaide, and fervently commend her to the protection of heaven.

“We have often agreed, that to us there are pleasures even in absence, more exquisite, more refined than any of those which bear that name in the world. What then, O Adelaide ! will be our felicity when we meet ?—When, every anxious care and apprehension banished from our hearts, they shall glow with the constant aim, the delightful consciousness of rendering each other completely happy ?

“If these expectations are romantic and extravagant, time alone can correct them ; for reason assures me, that there is no wish my heart can form, which the merit and tenderness of the most excellent of women is not capable of fulfilling.

“Farewel ! Let us support each other with reflecting, that every hour is lessening the period that divides us, whilst it is adding strength to that delightful tenderness which shall bind us to each other for ever.

J. GRAMMONT.”

To the same.

“AT length, most beloved of women ! your fond lover, your faithful friend tastes of real transport, by being able to communicate it to you. A few moments are all I can at present command, to express to you an affection which occupies my whole soul, and shall be as lasting as my life. On occasion yes-

terday of a fally from the fort, I obtained permission to head a small party. We were successful beyond my hopes : The Marshal applauded my conduct, in terms better suited to his generosity than my merit ; and promised to advance me to the rank of major on the very first vacancy.

“ See, my best love ! does not fortune already relent, and cease to oppose our wishes ? Or rather, does not heaven itself smile on an affection, which at once it inspires and approves ? Cherish those hopes which now wholly possess my delighted bosom ; beguile the tedious, lingering hours of absence, by constantly writing to me : Your letters animate me with the love of virtue, as well as of fame.—What would the latter avail towards that felicity to which we aspire, if not deserved by the former ?

“ Adieu, dear sharer of all my joys ; soon may they be redoubled by participation ; soon may my eyes and my throbbing heart tell you, how tenderly, how constantly, you are beloved ! Your own will best convince you, how unspeakably dear you are to

Your ever faithful devoted,

—————.”

“ I purposely avoid subscribing this, as it goes by a courier, and I know not into whose hands it may fall.”

While Louisa was perusing this letter, a lay-sister entered hastily, and acquainted Adelaide, that a young man in the habit of a domestic, demanded to see her alone, and was waiting in the parlour.

Louisa put the letter in her pocket, and was about to retire, but Adelaide intreated her to accompany her to the grate, as she found herself seized with so universal a tremor, that she could hardly walk, and was afraid of fainting. Miss Seymour supported her friend into the parlour; on entering which, they perceived a genteel young man, in a suit of plain clothes, with whose face, though concealed in part by a handkerchief, Adelaide thought she was not intirely unacquainted.

On seeing Louisa, he paused, as if averse to communicate his message before any witnesses. Adelaide guessed the cause of his silence: This is my friend, Sir, said she, you may acquaint me with your commands without hesitation.

He moved towards the grate; and presenting a letter to Adelaide, with inimitable grace, "I am sorry, Madam," said he, in a low voice, "to be the bearer of this: I wish the contents could have been for ever concealed from you; but that cannot be. May this be the last pang that shall wound your gentle bosom; and in this asylum, if you cannot hope for happiness, may you at least attain resignation!"

The young man retired; but the astonishment into which his words and manner had plunged the two friends, left them neither power to detain, nor resolution to interrogate him concerning their mysterious meaning. Adelaide unfolded the letter, from which something dropt on the ground, which her agitation prevented her from observing. The hand was unknown to her, but the name of Rochelle at the bottom was not so; she instantly

recollected that the young Count who bore that name, had accompanied Grammont on his first visit to St. Germain, and she had heard him lavish in his praise.

A thousand confused and terrible images crowded into her mind ; and she trembled so violently, that it was with the utmost difficulty she perused these lines :

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ UNABLE to witness the affliction of the beautiful Adelaide, which can only be equalled by my own, I take this method of conveying to her the last adieu of the noblest, best of men.

“ O ! may heaven support you here, and unite you hereafter to him you loved ! Of all the world, ye were alone worthy of each other.

RAYMOND DE ROCHELLE.”

The letter dropt from the hand of Adelaide, and she fell without life into the arms of her friend.

After a few moments she opened her eyes, and fixing them on Louisa, with a look that pierced her to the soul : “ At length,” said she, “ my fears are confirmed, my happiness is no more. O God ! why was I permitted to enjoy supreme felicity, that I might feel the whole misery of being deprived of it ! But I will not murmur. I know I am blind, and ignorant ; thou art ever just and good.”

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Afraid of being observed in this distressing situation, Louisa raised her friend from the ground, in order to convey her to her cell. At that moment she observed the billet which had dropt out of the letter, and which she immediately slipped into her pocket. Having given orders that nobody should enter till called, she put Adelaide to bed; and throwing herself down by her side, gave free course to those tears which served to relieve her bursting heart. Adelaide remained a long time without sense or motion. Her eyes were open, but neither sighs nor tears escaped her. A coldness, like that of death, seized her trembling limbs, and Louisa became so terrified with her danger, that she had recourse to the bell for assistance. Having procured some cordials, which Adelaide swallowed without opposition or remonstrance, she became somewhat easier; and at last so far recollected herself, as to inquire about the billet, whose contents she at once dreaded and longed to peruse.

Louisa knew it would be in vain to deny her request, and hoped, by granting it, she might procure her friend the relief of tears. Besides, she was not ignorant of the danger Adelaide would incur, if nature, thus wholly overpowered and insensible, should not be awakened, to feel and to deplore its own wretchedness. What a mournful proof of human infirmity does such a situation exhibit, when to a total suspension of its powers, the mind is indebted for their preservation; and when our boasted reason, restored to its seat, instead of combating our sorrows, only supplies new excuses for indulging them. She presented her with the billet, which Adelaide requested her to read aloud, but the task was impracticable. Almost suffocated with

the violence of her emotions, she returned it to Adelaide, who, on perusing its melancholy contents, caught the infectious tenderness of sorrow from her friend, and dissolved in a flood of tears.

To Adelaide de St. Grace.

"A FEW moments are granted me by heaven, to take a long, a last farewell. Oh, Adelaide! Oh, my adored mistress!—my fondly expected wife!—where are now our dreams of happiness? They are fled for ever; and have left me equally unable to tear myself from this world, or to prepare for another. Even whilst I write, my vital current stops; a wound in my side has almost drained its sources. The hope of soon returning to you, inspired me with a courage too ardent and impetuous. Forgive me, Adelaide! I have ruined your peace by my rashness.

"Strive to moderate your sorrow; the thought of it distracts me. Make now a voluntary sacrifice of yourself to heaven, to which the zeal of your friends was impelling you. I trust it will be accepted.—The pen drops from my trembling hand.—Yet a few years, Adelaide, and we shall meet, never to fear separation more! Let this console you.—My soul! my Adelaide, farewell! Oh, farewell for ever! Love, pity, and forgive me; but never, O never forget

—————!"

Language can but faintly express the mingled emotions of grief, admiration, and despair, which alternately agitated the bosom of the unhappy Ade-

laide. Louisa was not ignorant, that to attempt by reasoning to moderate a sorrow so just, was only to add to its violence. In truth, she knew not to reason, though exquisitely to feel; and the silence of her sympathy produced that effect on the heart of Adelaide, which neither religion nor philosophy for some time could have wrought. The passions exhaust themselves with their own violence; and where so many contend for dominion in the human soul, the powers of each are weakened.

God is to the moral and intellectual, what the sun is to the natural world,—the source of light, life, and joy. And man can no more be happy without intercourse with his Maker, than plants can thrive and vegetate without the benign influences of that glorious luminary. Cold and darkness are felt by the heavenly bodies in proportion to their distance from the sun; just so does it fare with the soul of man. In prosperity the bountiful Giver is obscured by the multiplicity of his gifts. These, like vapours from the heated earth, rise and interpose between man and his Maker. But no sooner does the tempest of adversity descend, than the cloud is dispersed, and, desolate and forlorn, he feels all the necessities of his nature; his weakness and dependence, his hopelessness and need of divine aid; and returns, repentant, to duty, to happiness, and God.

A few weeks saw Adelaide restored to that calm and settled melancholy, which arises from the hopelessness of enjoyment, but is often mistaken by the world for a species of it. One yet remained to her, that of pouring her sorrows without restraint into the faithful bosom of friendship, and indulging con-

annually those tender recollections, which were so soothing to her mind, that at times they made her almost forget the fatal event which gave them birth.

During the remaining months of her noviciate, which was shortened at her request, Adelaide strove to prepare her mind for the solemn dedication of herself to heaven. It required but little resolution to abandon a world, where her peace had been wrecked, and from which she neither expected nor wished to receive happiness.

As the spring was now advanced, and Mrs. Seymour felt her strength rather decreasing, she became extremely anxious to return to England.

Her young fellow-traveller had experienced much happier effects from change of climate; the pain in his side, occasioned by the fall, had intirely left him, and his impatience to return seemed to equal Mrs. Seymour's.

It originated, however, from a secret and very different cause. The humane attentions bestowed on him by her charming daughter, at a time when the dejected spirits and softened heart are particularly sensible to kindness, had made a lasting impression on Mr. Stanhope's; and esteem and admiration combined with gratitude to inspire him with a passion, which he was at no pains to suppress, because he was conscious of nothing which should have opposed his indulging it.

At length the day was fixed, on which the unfortunate and afflicted Adelaide was to enter those sacred walls, which, like the grave, were for ever

to conceal her sorrows : Happy, if like the grave they could have banished the remembrance of them.

The travellers hastened their departure from Montpellier, that they might witness the awful ceremony ; Louisa found this a severe trial to her weak spirits, as the concourse of nobility assembled for that purpose was very great. Madame Maintenon, as abbess, had a seat placed near the altar, round which the young princesses attended. Miss Seymour was allowed to support her affectionate friend during the whole ceremony. She alone knew what need she had of support. The solemn service began :—The pealing organ, responsive to the enchanting voices of the choristers, alternately dissolved the soul in tenderness, elevated it with hope, or rapt it in adoration and praise.—The music ceased : the prayers of all present were requested to aid those of the young faint ; and the grace of the Most High implored to animate her faith, and confirm her resolutions.

The priest arose and conducted her to the door of the cell where she was to be stripped of all those ornaments with which, as it is customary, her friends had richly adorned her for the occasion. A solemn and affecting silence ensued. The lovely victim returned, clad in her dismal habit, and walking steadily up to the altar, kneeled before it to receive the veil.

One proof only remained to shew her fixed resolution of renouncing the vanities of the world, and to complete the ceremony of her dedication ;—that of parting with her fine hair, which flowed in abundance over her neck and shoulders, and shaded a

face, whose beauty the traces of recent affliction had rendered unspeakably touching. As she bent her head forward for this purpose, with a look of patient and peaceful resignation, she was startled by a heavy groan, which proceeded from the gallery appointed for those who were only spectators of this solemnity.

A bustle ensued, which directed the eyes of all towards the gallery. Her's instantly recognized there the face of the Count de Rochelle, who, yielding to his extreme curiosity to behold this affecting scene, felt himself so violently agitated with the sight of Adelaide, and recollection of her misfortunes, that he fainted in the arms of young Stanhope, whom chance had placed next him.

Various were the conjectures occasioned by this accident : the effect produced by it on the mind of Adelaide, is not to be described. She alone knew the nature of those sentiments which occasioned it, and her grateful, though oppressed heart, sighed in sympathy with that of the generous and compassionate Rochelle. The interruption to the ceremony, caused by this affair, gave her time a little to recover herself, and she went through the remaining part of it with tolerable composure.

As nothing is so irksome to a mind in deep affliction, as the exertion necessary for mixing with an unfeeling world, Adelaide found the solitude of a convent not only agreeable but salutary. The consolations of religion operated there with full force, and knowing how prone the mind is, after being violently agitated with passion, to sink into listlessness, she endeavoured to occupy her time with such

employments and amusements as recommended themselves at once by their novelty and importance. By degrees, the gloom of misfortune was exchanged for the serenity of hope; and though she seldom tasted of pleasure, peace became the constant inmate of her bosom.

A few days after seeing her friend profess, Miss Seymour took a last, affecting farewell of St. Ciro, and its beloved inhabitants. We feel a sort of sacred enthusiasm for the place, where first our tender passions have been awakened. The anguish she felt, on bidding Adelaide adieu, was extreme; but it was soon in a great measure obliterated, by fear and anxiety about her mother, whose worst symptoms now recurred with redoubled violence.

During their journey to Calais, young Stanhope had an opportunity of repaying the former attentions of Miss Seymour, and of shewing the goodness of his own heart, whilst every day increased his admiration of her's.

The absence of her friend was now severely felt by Louisa; and as they were obliged to remain some days at Calais to recruit Mrs. Seymour, she employed every spare moment in communicating to her the distress with which she was overwhelmed.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

"I AM divided from you, my beloved friend, at the very instant when I most required your pious instructions and tender sympathy. My mother's complaints daily increase, and fear and suspense

are now added to the affliction with which your misfortunes almost overwhelmed me. Oh ! why am I not permitted to dwell with you at a distance from the world, or armed with more courage to encounter its dangers ? Without parents.....without fortune.....almost without friends.....what, my Adelaide, will become of me ?——Strive to inspire me with a portion of your heavenly resignation, to arm me with the fortitude necessary for my present trying situation ; and oh ! if possible, teach me to check those evil forebodings of a disturbed imagination, which are a thousand times more insupportable than real calamity.

“ Write to me constantly, my beloved friend ; the tenderness of your sympathy will at least alleviate my sorrow, if the influence of your example do not intirely regulate my conduct. Adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ MY heart shares tenderly in the distress of my friend ; but, alas ! I am neither qualified by years nor experience to be her conductress through the difficult mazes of life. I am not yet arrived at that blissful tranquillity on which you congratulate me. Officious memory still awakens such dear, yet dangerous recollections, as convey to my soul all the bitterness of disappointed hope. O, Louisa ! there is a charm in loving and being beloved, in feeling one’s self the continual source of joy and happiness to the object of one’s best and most tender affections, that takes such hold of the imagination, as none of the subsequent evils of life have power to obliterate.

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Experience has taught me, too, that the heart will continue to sigh, even after the soul is resigned. — Ah, my friend ! what arrow pierces so deep, what wound bleeds so often, what anguish lasts so long, as that occasioned by the death of those we love ? With what a tender mixture of pleasure and regret do we dwell on their virtues ; with what eagerness listen to their praise ; whilst fame does justice to their merit, and envy is silent....for there is no competition in the grave ! Gracemont !...tears are the only tribute I can pay to thy merit ; tears, due to youth, virtue, and bravery ! Common laurels wither and decay ; but that which is supplied and watered by such a stream shall never fade ; it towers above the skies, and flourishes to immortality.

“Do not, my Louisa, covet a life of seclusion from the world ; we ought ever to be contented with the station allotted us by Providence. In retirement, we possess at best a kind of negative virtue : there our affections languish for want of proper objects to excite them ; and our goodness consists rather in the absence of evil, than in any positive habits of rectitude, or exertions of benevolence. It is in society alone that the genuine character can be ascertained. There, our virtue is tried ; and if it stand the test, from that trial results our highest intellectual enjoyment.....the pleasing consciousness of superior worth, and the lasting meed of self-approbation.

“Philosophy, my dear Louisa, may enable us to talk of fortitude ; but religion empowers us to exercise it. Think often, my afflicted friend, on that glorious period, when freed from the mist of error, the perplexity of doubt, and the sophistry of passion, we shall contemplate with astonishment, and ac-

quiesce with rapture, in the unerring decrees of eternal Providence.

"Adieu, dear and amiable friend. You have the prayers, the best wishes, and most lasting affection, of your

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX."

We shall now leave the travellers to pursue their journey, which they did by very slow stages, and return to give some account of what passed at the castle of Hastings during their absence.

The frequent letters Lady Granville received from Louisa, and which she generally communicated to Lord Granville, served agreeably to amuse their winter evenings, and to increase their esteem and affection for the amiable writer. The admirable descriptions they contained, of the curiosities of Paris and its environs, and the reflections blended with them, shewed, that while Miss Seymour suffered nothing worthy of curiosity to escape her notice, she made objects of sentiment her chief study, and from them derived her highest enjoyment.

The Marquis of Winchester, who had a fine seat in that neighbourhood, came with his daughter, Lady Charlotte Villiers, to reside there during the autumn, about the time Mrs. Seymour and her daughter set out for France. Lord and Lady Granville waited on the Marquis and Lady Charlotte, and requested the favour of their company at the castle. As they did not propose returning to London till after Christmas, they spent most of their time there. The Marquis's fortune was inadequate to his rank, which induced him to spend much of his time in the country; as his strict notions of honour forbade

his plunging into expense, which he knew must either ruin his family or injure society.

Lady Charlotte possessed so many advantages from nature, that she seemed in no want of those of fortune. To a fine person, and a good understanding, she added such a share of vivacity and polished manners, as rendered her one of the most agreeable companions in the world. Lord Granville beheld in Lady Charlotte the very woman he wished for a daughter-in-law ; and entertained little doubt of obtaining the approbation of the Marquis to a marriage, which, in respect of fortune, was all he could desire for his daughter. Conscious, however, of the waywardness of the human heart, he deferred communicating his plan to his son, till he should see the young people on such a footing of intimacy, as should give room to hope for their concurrence with it.

In consequence of the following letter from his father, Lord Hastings returned to the castle, about a month before the arrival of the travellers.

“ THOUGH I wished my dear Henry to have made a longer stay at Cambridge, an accident has happened which obliges me to request his immediate return home. Dr. Melville, who has been lately threatened with a decline, has, at my desire, agreed to give up his academy, and attend you on your tour. As he fears risking next winter in our northern climate, I propose that you shall set out in a few months hence, and wish to enjoy your society during the summer. Besides, I would wish to introduce you to some of the neighbouring families, many of whom are highly respectable ; and to

inspire you with that preference for your own country that will dispose you to return to it with pleasure."

On his arrival, Lord Hastings found the Marquis and his daughter at the castle. Wholly ignorant of his father's views, and free from that embarrassing consciousness which the presence of Miss Seymour had occasioned, he appeared with all the advantages of a fine person, a cultivated mind, elegant manners, and a most engaging address.

Lady Charlotte was perfectly qualified to judge of his merit. Notwithstanding of her early introduction into the gay world, her good sense had preserved her from adopting its follies; whilst, by mixing with it, she had acquired a degree of frankness and ease peculiarly agreeable to a temper like that of Lord Hastings. Her constant good humor and vivacity made him find a thousand charms in her society; and as she excelled in music, an art in which he had made considerable progress, and of which he was greatly enamoured, their time passed most agreeably.

One morning, when Lord Granville and his son were together in his study, concerting the plan of his future travels, he addressed him in the following manner:—"My dear Henry, I will not deny you the pleasure of knowing, that hitherto your conduct has been such, as affords me the most real satisfaction. To complete it, one object only remains, that of seeing you marry, and form such an alliance as will do credit both to your judgment and your heart. I know, by experience, that the whole happiness of life depends on this connection. I do not

consider myself as authorised, to constrain your choice, but, as your friend, would wish to direct it. Lady Charlotte Villiers appears to me both worthy, and agreeable ; her birth is suitable to your own ; and, if I am not mistaken, your merit has not been beheld by her with indifference."

Lord Hastings expressed the most lively sense of his father's goodness, and joined very cordially in praise of Lady Charlotte, who, together with the Marquis, was that very moment announced by a servant. He flew to hand her from her carriage ; but the conversation which had just passed, gave an awkward consciousness to his manner, which did not escape the penetrating eyes of Lady Charlotte, who felt herself too deeply interested in all his feelings, to permit the slightest of them to pass unobserved.

She rallied him with much spirit and good humour on the visible change in his manner. And after a variety of sprightly sallies, "Come, come," said she, I will not question you any farther on this subject, for I suppose your father has been catechising you sufficiently already, as I saw you come out of his study just now." The face of Lord Hastings was crimsoned over by this speech, which served at once to increase his embarrassment and Lady Charlotte's curiosity. She was too well bred, however, to persist in her raillery, which she saw produce such visible emotion in Lord Hastings. But though several topics were started, the conversation grew languid ; and on returning home, Lady Charlotte bewildered herself in vainly striving to unravel the mystery of his behaviour. As we are prone to believe what we wish, and as Lord Haf-

tings had been uncommonly assiduous about this Lady, she hardly doubted of having made an impression on a heart whose affections she sincerely wished to engage. But though his visits were as frequent as ever, the ease of his manner was exchanged for a caution which was unnatural at his time of life, and foreign to his character, and which threw a constraint into all their conversations, highly prejudicial to those sentiments which Lady Charlotte felt and wished to inspire.

Things were in this train when Mrs. Seymour and her daughter arrived at Springwood.

Lady Granville flew to welcome her friend, but, alas ! she knew not in what terms to speak that welcome, when she beheld in her pale face and emaciated figure, every symptom of approaching dissolution.

Tears of mingled tenderness and grief bedewed the bosom of Louisa, as Lady Granville pressed her to her affectionate heart. She did not attempt to deceive her with vain hopes, but to arm her with fortitude and resignation.

As Louisa never quitted her mother's apartment, Lord Hastings had no opportunity of gratifying his curiosity, which was become painfully ardent, by the daily encomiums bestowed by his mother, both on the mind and person of Miss Seymour ; the latter of which, she said, had acquired inexpressible graces, whilst at the same time she had lost nothing of that amiable ingenuity and simplicity of manners which was her greatest charm.

The anxious mind of Louisa was soothed, soon after her arrival, by the following letter from her friend :

To Miss Seymour.

“HOW many are the sources of elegant delight which memory opens to a mind fraught with sensibility ! Who would forego the tenderness of melancholy for the tumults of pleasure, or the meltings of sympathy for the noise of applause ?

“Deprived of your dear society, Louisa, I have recourse to the past. I wander through those solemn scenes which witnessed the reciprocations of our mutual confidence and friendship. I strive to recollect not only your words, but your looks and placid smiles. I listen to the soothing language of heavenly hope and pious resignation ; I still hear you breathe the sigh of sympathetic tenderness ; I still see your mild eyes bedimmed with the tear of sincere compassion. Ah, Louisa ! it is still due to the secret sorrows of your friend ! Nor is the present forgotten in the recollection of the past. I follow you in imagination through every stage of your painful journey. I strive to support and assist you in the melancholy duties of soothing and comforting a dying parent.

“O ! may the Father of the afflicted himself vouchsafe to strengthen you for every duty, and support you under every trial !

“Let me intreat my Louisa to strive against melancholy ; it will unfit you for the offices of social life. The cause of your present depression is an

amiable one, and for this reason you ought to be on your guard with respect to its effects. We are apt to condemn ourselves when any personal affliction depresses our spirits ; but when we languish by a sympathetic pang, a ray of self-approbation beams through the soul ; we are flattered by our own sensibility, and cherish the sadly pleasing sensations, till they acquire a dangerous strength.

“ Let us reflect, my love ! that the beneficent Parent of the universe can, in no sense, be the author of evil ; that the more wisdom which is displayed in his moral government, the less can we possibly comprehend it ; and what we, from ignorance or blindness, perhaps too from perverseness, denominate evil, must certainly be good in his sight, who shall cause all the seeming disorders of the present scene to issue in the final perfection and felicity of his intelligent creation.

“ As one earthly prop is withdrawn, the heart of man fondly clings to another, till insensibly they drop one by one, and he is left desolate and solitary to encounter the storms of life. What were then the anguish of his soul, could he rest on no firmer stay than a mortal like himself,....could he look towards no more stable inheritance than this land of shadows, which, even to his corporeal sight, is fast passing away ? Yes, my Louisa, though the streams of happiness flow here in narrow channels,....are interrupted by accident, and embittered by misfortune,....to the pious it is matter of everlasting consolation, that the great Fountain of existence and felicity is immutable, inexhaustible, and eternal. Farewel !”

Mrs. Seymour's illness increased so quickly, that a few weeks brought her to the verge of the grave. One day, whilst Lady Granville was sitting by her bedside, having desired Louisa to take a turn in the garden for the benefit of fresh air, she grasped her hand, and with a voice enfeebled by sickness and interrupted by sorrow, thus addressed her:—"I am persuaded, my beloved friend, this scene is by no means unexpected to you; to me, be assured, it is welcome: One only tie binds me to earth...that dear, that amiable child! But I know, whilst Lady Granville lives, Louisa will never want a mother. The Almighty hath given me many gracious warnings of that fate which is fast approaching;—I trust I am prepared to meet it.—You know I have had but little satisfaction in reviewing some part of my past life; perhaps I have scanned my errors with too severe an eye....that of Omniscience is now upon me! I presume not to repose on the rectitude of my intentions, or regularity of my conduct; my hope is that of a Christian, and it will never deceive me."

Lady Granville said every thing that piety, friendship, and good sense could dictate, to calm the anxieties of Mrs. Seymour; she even ventured to assure her, that while she lived she would never suffer Louisa to have any other home than her house.

Mrs. Seymour only survived a week after this conversation, during which she strove to reconcile Louisa to a separation, which would confessedly be for her happiness.

"Do not, my dearest child," said she, "O do not embitter my last moments by indulging ex-

andive sorrow for my death ! Consider it in the light of a short absence ;—look on me as having gone a little before in a journey in which you are soon to follow me. Perhaps our separation will neither be so real nor intire, as that occasioned by absence while on earth : perhaps I may still be permitted to watch over my child ; at least I will not long be disjoined from her.”

There was something unspeakably soothing in the idea suggested by the last part of this discourse : Louisa dwelt on it with peculiar delight ; but, in the midst of the extreme dejection occasioned by the solemnity of a death-bed, her drooping heart required a firmer support than a pleasing dream or a doubtful hope. Her mother perceived this ; and in directing her to the light of revelation and the prospect of immortality, gave patience to her sufferings, and mingled consolation with her sorrows.

“ I leave you, my beloved child,” said she, a few hours before her death ; “ but I leave you under the protection of that God who sees it good for us to part ; who is in a peculiar manner the Father of the fatherless, and shield of the orphan.

“ Earthly friends fail us at our greatest need ; but this heavenly Friend will never forsake us. Earthly friends can only pity our misfortunes ; but God is able to avert them. Fear God, then, my dearest child, and you need have no other fear.”

Though the first transports of grief on the death of her mother prevented Louisa from deriving all that consolation from these discourses which they

were calculated to inspire, they returned to her thoughts in the calmer hours, when passion began to subside, and carried the sweetest consolation to her heart.

Lady Granville was very desirous that Miss Seymour should return with her to the Castle the evening her mother expired ; but she would by no means consent to leave Springwood, till she had fulfilled the last duties to her respected parent. That humane friend did not urge her, but, revering her pious sorrows, left her a while in quiet to indulge them ; and sending for her own maid, a prudent, sensible woman, to attend her, returned to the castle to give orders for the funeral, which Louisa intreated might be as private as possible. Accordingly, in three days afterwards, the corpse was interred early in the morning, in a burial-place erected by his lady on the death of Colonel Seymour.

Nothing could be more soothing to the afflicted Louisa, than the frequent letters she received from Adelaide during her distress. When the dark clouds of adversity surround us, they exclude every ray of pleasure, but that which reaches and cheers the soul from tender and sincere sympathy.

The following was brought her the evening of that day which deprived her of the best of mothers.

To Miss Seymour.

“ THE stillness and quiet of my present situation grows every day more agreeable. Methinks, Louisa, at the age of twenty-two, I feel a strong conviction, that *all is vanity*, as Solomon did after a long

life, in which all the wishes of his heart, and powers of his imagination were exhausted, in pursuit of a felicity, which, alas! these shadows of real good could never yield.

"Affliction, I trust, has taught me true wisdom. It has brought upon me a sort of premature old age, which serves instead of experience. Though neither satiated with the pleasures of the world, nor disgusted by its disappointments, I shall rise satisfied from life's feast, and leave the banquet to those for whom it has the charm of novelty, and whose ignorance of its dangers makes them behold it with desire.

"With what calm indifference, Louisa! do I mark the silent lapse of time, and behold its several periods come to a close! Why should we indulge immoderate sorrow for the loss of those who are gone before us, when every day, every hour, every moment, is accelerating the blissful period of our reunion?

"Books are now my chief amusement: Some of these represent life as bright and cheerful; others teach me to despise its storms, or inform me that they are salutary; whilst experience adds, that they are transient too. Methinks this consideration ought to silence both our peevish discontents and fantastic wishes.

"Sometimes I direct my solitary walks to the silent mansions of the dead; and, forgetful of the world, and all its vexing inquietudes, seem to share for a while their blissful repose. But I advance a

step farther, my Louisa, and find, even among the dominions of death, proofs of the soul's immortality.

"Here is evinced, the amazing truth, that it is the same matter, variously modified; which constitutes both the earth and its inhabitants. Animals derive their subsistence from plants, which are nourished by the common mould; at the appointed season all these return to this their first principle. But since, in the visible creation, there exists nothing analogous to mind, let us not imagine that the soul can ever be reduced to a state like that of beings which are altogether different from it.—Themes like these, my Louisa, cannot fail to be in harmony with your present feelings, since your last letters assure me that your dear deserving parent is past all hope of recovery. Let reflections like these support your soul in view of that afflicting event which either awaits you, or is already arrived. Oh, my Louisa! how much need have I to dwell on them myself! This day completes my twenty-second year, the most eventful of my life. How little did I dream, at its commencement, that the fabric my fond hopes had reared was so soon to tumble into ruins! That he, for whose sake alone I welcomed its arrival, and wished its continuance, should, ere its close, be torn from my bosom, and hidden for ever from my eyes! But though these bodily organs no more behold thee, best and dearest of men! thou art ever present to my mind's eye, in thy exalted virtues, thy spotless manners, and thy fair fame: These shall justify the tears with which I embalm thy memory, and convert my sorrows into virtue.

"Write constantly to me, my amiable, afflicted friend ! You know how tenderly I partake in your sorrows. Believe me, Louisa, to soften one pang of yours, even at the expence of sharing it, will be preferable, in my estimation, to all that the world calls pleasure."

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

"YOUR letter has reached me, my friend, and conveyed to my soul the only consolation of which at present it is capable. Yesterday, all my cares for the best of women ended ;—she is happy :—Shall I not then be resigned ?—I trust I am so. Yet, oh, my Adelaide ! it is difficult, it is impossible, to restrain the tears of nature, when the long endeared sacred tie of kindred and of friendship is rudely broken by death ! Till that cruel moment, when the grave closes over those we love, we cannot sufficiently admire the excellence of that religion which teaches us to look beyond it. Ah, my friend, do they act agreeably to their own principles, who contend for the dignity of human nature, and yet believe that the soul of man—advancing daily in virtue and knowledge—aspiring after perfection—longing for immortality—cut off in the midst of its pursuits and wishes,—shall share the same fate with the meanest reptile that crawls on the face of the earth ?

"Alas ! how dismal, how hopeless, must be the sorrow of such gloomy, such benighted minds !

"Books, you say, supply your favourite amusement. Our opinion, both of books and characters,

is influenced by the tone of our mind at the time we become acquainted with them. Perhaps it is owing to this circumstance that I have perused the following fable with peculiar satisfaction this morning; and, in the hope of its producing the same effect on you, I shall here transcribe it.

"In ancient times, says the fabulist, when the Creator of the world placed our first parents in paradise, to prevent them from growing weary of each other, he appointed Happiness, the fairest of his offspring to reside with them.

"For some time her charms were beheld with admiration, and her merit treated with respect. But beauty, by growing familiar, ceased to excite pleasure; and merit, from want of novelty, soon incurred neglect. The favourite, even of celestial beings, Happiness, could ill brook so unkind a reception from mortals; and one day, on occasion of a quarrel between her associates, in which they both betrayed marks of altered dispositions, she was so disgusted, that she hastily bade them adieu; and, ascending to her former abode, intreated the great Ruler of the Universe that she might never more be sent to dwell with those who knew so ill to value her society.

"The moment she was gone, her companions became sensible of their error. They deplored her absence, and conjured her to return, in terms of the most earnest supplication. But Happiness was inexorable; and the utmost they could obtain from her, was a promise, that, provided they were never again heard to quarrel, she would depute her young-

er sister, Contentment, to reside with them, and even occasionally visit them herself.

“How far our primogenitors complied with these terms, we are still ignorant; but it would appear that Happiness, like other injured females, not only continued to resent former ill-usage, but even entertained constant suspicions of future maltreatment. For it is universally known, that whenever she deigns to visit these lower regions, she never stays longer than, just like those mortals who pretend to emulate her perfections, to receive the homage of her admirers, to make a display of her charms, and by bestowing some slight favours on each, to heighten the desires and secure the admiration of all her votaries.”

Immediately after the funeral, Lady Granville prepared to go to Springwood, in order to bring her young charge to the Castle. But the agitating scenes she had lately witnessed, and the loss of a friend she dearly loved, had so sensibly affected her health, that, just as she was stepping into the coach, she was seized with such a faintness, that it was with difficulty Lord Hastings could get her supported back to her apartment. Unwilling to add affliction to the oppressed heart of Louisa, and flattering herself this indisposition would quickly go off, she sent a note to acquaint her, that she was prevented from coming for her at that hour, as she intended, but would certainly call for her in the evening, when she expected to find every thing in readiness to be moved to her apartment at the Castle, where she should still find a tender, indulgent mother, ready with open arms to receive her.

The last sentence dissolved the whole soul of Louisa in gratitude and tenderness, and gave birth to a thousand ideas, which, though confused and indistinct, left no traces but such as were pleasing. She hastened to prepare for her removal; and expecting Lady Granville every minute, took out her mother's picture, bathed it with her tears, and implored the Almighty to enable her to tread in the steps of his departed servant!

It was now the beginning of May; the air was perfectly mild, and the beautiful woods and meadows were gilded with the last trembling rays of the sun. It disappeared; and was succeeded by that serene glowing sky which marks the evenings of that enchanting season with peculiar beauty.

Louisa, from the window of her mother's apartment, had long contemplated this scene; if it did not banish her sorrows, at least it betraimed and soothed them. She had marked the brightly setting sun, and traced in her mind a pleasing resemblance between the progress of that heavenly orb and that of a good life. The departure of that bright luminary inspired feelings perfectly congenial with those impressed on her mind by the scenes she had lately witnessed. "After cheering this world with his beams," said she, "and diffusing health and beauty around him, this glorious image of his Maker retires, perhaps, to renew his strength, and bless other regions." But the comparison would extend no farther. A few hours would restore to the eyes of men the cheering light of the world; but, with a pang almost insupportable, she recollected, that her eyes must no more behold the parent she so fondly loved.

Resolved, before quitting Springwood, to visit her lowly dwelling, she passed, unnoticed, through the garden, and opening a door which led into the park, walked slowly towards the burial-place. The silence which prevailed around, the deepening shades of evening, and the sudden rising of the moon from behind a cloud, which gave an indistinct appearance to almost every object, affected her weak spirits so much, that she stood, and for some moments hesitated about going forward; but, recollecting how seldom she might find so favourable an opportunity of indulging her solemn meditations, she entered the little inclosure, and kneeling at the side of the grave, strove to raise her thoughts from the gloomy object before her, and to fix them on those which she felt convey peace and even joy to her soul.

She continued some moments in this attitude when, starting at the rustling of a bush behind her, she hastily arose, and turning towards the door, exclaimed,—“All gracious heaven! Lord Hastings!”

Terrified beyond expression with his sudden and unexpected appearance, she fell lifeless on the grave of her mother. Reduced almost to the same condition, the astonished Hastings, kneeling by her side, endeavoured to raise her up, and recal her to life. Several minutes elapsed before his cares had the desired effect. He attempted in vain to offer some excuse for his intrusion; his words were so incoherent, and Louisa appeared so incapable of attending to them, that he forebore talking. His looks, however, sufficiently expressed the perturbation of his mind, whilst he strove to prevail on her to accept of his arm; by the help of which,

with a staggering pace, she walked slowly towards the house.

Whilst the maid was employed in putting Louisa's little wardrobe into the coach, she recollected herself so far as to inquire after Lady Granville. Lord Hastings replied, that being a little indisposed, she had desired him to wait on her, and attend her to the Castle. "I greatly fear, Miss Seymour," added he, "that my visit at this time has proved an unwelcome one." Louisa attempted a reply, but the words died on her lips.

They entered the coach; and a silence ensued, which would have been painfully embarrassing, had not the presence of the maid seemed to authorize it. —When they alighted, Lord Hastings again pressed Louisa to accept of his arm, that he might conduct her to his mother's apartment; but she declined it, saying, with a tone of the sweetest acknowledgment, that she thanked his Lordship, but was now, she believed, able to walk by herself.

Afraid to witness a meeting so tender, he retired to his apartment, and took up his pen to indulge the feelings of his heart, by pouring it out to his friend.

To Mr. Beaufort, Cambridge.

"BEAUFORT, I am most unhappy.—Your suspicions are justified:—I love;—but spare your friend, and let the acknowledgment of my weakness obtain for me your pity, as well as indulgence. Believe me, the knowledge of this secret is new to myself. My thoughts are all confusion, else would I de-

scribe to you the scene of this evening ; till death shall expunge every trace from my memory, even that which it shall lose the latest,—the image of Louisa,....I will never, never forget it.

“ At eight this morning, I witnessed the interment of poor Mrs. Seymour ; but, though my desire to see her charming daughter was inexpressibly great, I could not intrude on her at a moment so solemn. In the evening, my mother being indisposed, she desired me to go and attend Miss Seymour to the Castle.

“ On arriving at Springwood, and inquiring for her young lady, the maid told me, that she believed she was walking in the garden. I followed ; but not seeing her in any of the walks, I pursued that which leads to the park ; in a retired part of which stands the family burial-place surrounded with high trees and a wall, which concealed her from sight.

“ The evening was delightfully still ; I stood and listened to the sound of a distant cascade, which alone interrupted the awful silence. Having looked in vain for Miss Seymour, I was just about to return, when I observed the door of the burial-place open. My heart throbbed with strange emotions : I approached without noise, and beheld—O Beaufort ! an object that almost deprived me of my senses. It was Louisa herself, clothed in her mourning habit, and kneeling at the foot of her mother's grave. At her side lay the picture of her revered parent : her hands were folded over her bosom, in an attitude of devotion, and her mild eyes, streaming with tears, were fixed on heaven.—Beaufort ! think what I felt at that moment ! The lovely saint was

Startled by the suddenness of my appearance, and occasioned me dreadful alarms, by fainting at a distance from all help. She is now, thank heaven, in health and safety, in the next apartment with my mother, to whose care she was intrusted by her own, on her death-bed.

“ Oh, Beaufort ! what will become of your friend ? I recal to mind my father’s conversation—his views—my attentions to Lady Charlotte—perhaps her partiality !——Oh ! can I offend against honour, duty, gratitude ! Yet what do I say ? I have never deceived Lady Charlotte ; my father only wishes to direct, not constrain my choice. But I bewilder myself in a variety of reflections, and dare not trust to the decisions of my own mind in its present distracted state. Write to me, Beaufort, without a moment’s delay. Calm the agonies of my mind—assure me that I have not acted dishonourably—and oh ! say, if you can, that I may yet hope for Louisa’s love ; without that hope I am miserable ! Farewel.

HASTINGS.”

On inquiring after his mother, Lord Hastings was informed that she was still greatly indisposed, and wished to see him. His agitation was not lessened, when, on entering the room, he beheld Louisa sitting by her bedside, and holding a hand of Lady Granville in her’s, which she bathed with her tears. Lord Hastings approached the bed, and inquiring anxiously about her complaints, took hold of the other hand, which he was surprised to feel very hot and feverish. “ Henry,” said she, “ this dear child has been too much accustomed of late

to scenes of distress. Try to amuse her.—Go, my dear,” continued she, “Hastings will attend you to the drawing-room, and shew you some beautiful prints I have just purchased. Those of your favourite Salvator I intend for your apartment: Choose out the landscapes you admire most; and flatter me, by discovering that your taste agrees with my own.”

Louisa arose, and walked with Lord Hastings, into the drawing-room; but thought not of the prints. She read his apprehensions in his dejected countenance; and instantly catching the alarm, intreated him to tell her what he thought of Lady Granville's situation.

“Perhaps, Miss Seymour,” said he, “my fears magnify her danger; but at present, she certainly has every symptom of a fever.” Louisa's affliction was inexpressible; and she could not help sighing in a low voice,—“How unhappy am I!—will Heaven deprive me of every friend?”—“No Miss Seymour,” replied Lord Hastings, with much emotion, “you will never want friends:—Virtues like your's, secure the friendship of Heaven itself.”

This affecting conversation was interrupted by the arrival of Lord Granville, who had spent the day at the house of a neighbouring gentleman.—He was extremely shocked, at his return, to hear of his lady's illness; gave orders that Dr. Lewis should instantly be sent for; and never quitted her room till he came. The Doctor pronounced Lady Granville's disorder to be a fever, probably occasioned by the late agitation of her spirits; but, the

cause being now removed, he hoped the complaint would neither be formidable nor lasting.

Louisa implored her permission to watch by her during the night; but this, Lady Granville absolutely refused. She retired to her apartment, but not to bed.

Just as the clock struck one, she ventured to slip softly down, and listen at the door of Lady Granville's apartment. Having to pass that of Lord Hastings, which he had left open with the same intention, he saw her go down stairs, and supposing his mother grown worse, followed her in the greatest agitation. All being quiet, Louisa was returning softly, when she met Lord Hastings in the passage. At sight of him, she started with surprise. The eagerness of his inquiries after his mother, the fears he expressed for her own health, in a tone of peculiar tenderness, and the earnest manner in which he urged her to go immediately to rest, affected the weak spirits of Louisa in such a degree, that she could not restrain her tears. She pulled out her handkerchief to conceal them, and hastily retired. By an involuntary movement, he followed her some steps; as he was slowly returning towards his apartment, he saw a slip of paper lying in the passage, which he picked up without knowing what he did, and laid on his dressing-table. He sat down, and, revolving in his mind the various scenes of the past day, found his admiration of Louisa increase, with every new light in which her exalted character was placed.

He was about to undress, when the paper caught his eye; he unfolded it, and perceived that it was

written in a female hand; and instantly knew from the contents that it must be that of Miss Seymour. In reality she had dropt it, by pulling her handkerchief quickly out of her pocket.

It was dated midnight; contained the last words of her mother; and concluded with this solemn address: "Almighty God! shield of the orphan, be thou my guide and protector through the dangerous paths of life: and having removed from me the best of parents, spare in mercy the kindest of friends!"

The piety of Louisa, and tenderness of her attachment to his mother, melted the soul of Lord Hastings in love and gratitude; nor did her late proofs of his filial piety and solicitude for her safety less sensibly affect her's. Unable wholly to restrain his emotions, he inclosed the paper in a billet, which contained these words:—"This paper, which I found a few hours ago, can belong only to Miss Seymour. Pardon a curiosity which I found it impossible to restrain: I knew not the hand when I presumed to read it, but could be at no loss with regard to the writer.—O Miss Seymour! may your prayer be accepted! May you, indeed, be the care of heaven; and may peace for ever inhabit that gentle bosom, where such singular piety resides!"

This letter he presented to her unobserved, as she retired from the breakfasting parlour. The air of secrecy with which it was delivered, alarmed her conscious heart with a variety of confused emotions, and it throbbed with such violence, that it was

some minutes, after she reached her apartment, before she found courage to open and read it. When she did so, her eye impatiently sought for somewhat there, which it could not discover ; and she sighed at the close of it, without knowing the cause of her disappointment.

Lady Granville's fever was violent, and her recovery long doubtful. During that tedious languor which usually succeeds severe illness, her son and Louisa scarcely ever left her apartment. For them it had a thousand sweet and secret attractions ; united in the same tender cares, their hearts sympathised in the same delightful emotions. The bitterness of grief had yielded to the softness of melancholy, in the gentle bosom of Louisa, and she experienced a calm so delicious, that she would not have exchanged it for the tumult of pleasure.

This serenity, however, was not of long duration : the following letter from Adelaide, in answer to that one which acquainted her with Mrs. Seymour's death, revived in the affectionate heart of Louisa those anxious solitudes to which it had long been subjected.

To Miss Seymour.

"THOUGH the heart of my dearest gentle friend shared tenderly in all my sorrows, yet perfectly to sympathise with the afflicted, we must ourselves have experienced affliction. Now my Louisa will know what it is to shed the tear of hopeless, unutterable grief over the grave of her best friend. Thank God ! many yet remain to you ; may heav-

in. increase their number ! But let not the merits of any, however deserving, blot from your memory the image of your fond and faithful Adelaide.

“ I know your sorrow, my dearest Louisa, must be extreme : but allow me at least to endeavour to console you. Suffer me to remind you, that the traveller who has a long journey to accomplish, must not allow himself to be too much engrossed by any object, however pleasing, that he may meet with on his way. Friends, fortune, health, are blessings which a bountiful Providence supplies, to beguile the length of this weary pilgrimage, not to betray us in a forgetfulness of that better country to which we are hastening.

“ We are ever selfish in our sorrows : were it not so, would we repine when the truly good are taken from a world unhealthful to their virtues ? especially when in advanced life, and approaching to a second childhood.

“ If it require our utmost fortitude to behold this beautiful fabric dissolving into dust, ought we not to rejoice, when we are spared the humbling spectacle of the soul also, as it were, in ruins ?

“ ’Tis true, amidst the decays of her uncomfortable mansion, we know that the heavenly inhabitant remains unhurt ; but as her powers all lie dormant when proper agents are wanting to execute her will, she appears to us to partake in the ruin of her earthly habitation.

“ My health is very infirm, but my spirits calm, and my soul resigned. From this quiet harbour,

Louisa, I look back with pity on those who still toil on the ocean of life, and felicitate myself, that my little bark will be so soon ashore. In the soothing recollection of past happiness, and the hope that it will ere long be restored, I acquire a peace which resembles the repose of the blessed.—Yes, my Louisa! the prayer of the amiable and compassionate Rochelle is granted.—Yes, “though I can never expect happiness, I have at least attained resignation.”

To the same.

“I HAVE always considered it as a greater proof of heroism, to submit to live for a friend, than to die for one.—A few hours after dispatching my last letter, I was relieved from an illness that threatened my life; and the first sentiment of which I was conscious after my recovery, was gratitude, not on my own account, but your’s. Yes, my gentle friend, I know that at present my death would have greatly added to your affliction, and therefore I am thankful that life is lent me a little longer.

“The quiet of a cloister, my Louisa, where there are few objects to engage attention, forces the mind to seek employment at home. In the words of your admired English Poet, I strive to find

Friends in the trees, books in the running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.

“There is something peculiarly delightful to the mind in tracing such analogies between the natural and moral world, as tend to throw light on many important subjects, and to confirm our faith in the sublime doctrines of our holy religion.

"The origin and progressive stages of the butterfly's existence are beautifully illustrative of the nature, changes, and future destination of man. The butterfly is produced from a caterpillar, which devours garden plants, and which, having moved for a season in its lowly, narrow sphere, falls into a state of torpid insensibility. Thus it continues during the gloom of winter; but when the glad some beam of spring appears, it is re-animated,—bursts its confinement, soars aloft, acquires new beauty, power, and vigour. Its scene of action, its relishes, its exercises are changed; the substance is retained, but the modification is totally altered:—It is at once another and the same.——Have recourse then, ye infidels, to the demonstrations of annual experience, and then say,—Why should it be thought incredible that God should raise the dead?

"Themes like these, my Louisa, cannot be supposed frequently to employ your thoughts, in the midst of company and amusements. Let me from the quiet of a cloister, sometimes obtrude them upon you. Though my Louisa cannot expect amusement from the walls of a convent, yet that situation, as it inspires the most solemn reflections, will plead my excuse, if mine should at any time seem officious and impertinent.

"Deprived of your beloved society, I naturally seek for that of the gentle Constance. Though her conversation cannot console me for the loss of your's, her amiable dispositions bring you continually to my remembrance. In her, good sense and sweetness of temper do more than compensate for the absence of those shining talents, which dazzle, but

do not warm,—which awaken envy, but rarely conciliate affection.

“ Adieu, my dearest friend! May the cup of prosperity long be your’s, unimbittered by any mixture of peculiar affliction;—may those that are necessary prove healthful;—and may its flavour be heightened, and its relish endeared, by the cordial friendship of your

ADELAIDE.”

Before Lady Granville was able to take an airing in the coach, she was advised by Dr. Lewis to be carried into the garden, for the benefit of fresh air; where there was an elegant little pavilion, fitted up in the most exquisite taste, and which commanded one of the finest prospects in the world. There, whilst Louisa sat at work with Lady Granville, or amused herself with training the honeysuckle and jessamine round the windows, Lord Hastings usually read aloud. One day he took up a volume of Shakespeare, and chance directing him to the *Twelfth Night*, he began to read.

It was impossible for Louisa not to perceive that there was something particular in the whole manner of Lord Hastings towards her; and the various incidents of the last month had left her in no doubt with respect to the nature of her own sentiments. As his expressions, however, might be all justified on the score of friendship and gratitude, she did not dare to encourage hope, though she often felt the torment of suspense, and suffered extreme uneasiness from the dread of Lord Hastings entertaining the slightest suspicion of the truth.

As he advanced in the play, she felt herself greatly affected. When he came to that pathetic description, "She never told her love," &c. the colour forsook her cheeks, and her heart palpitated with the most painful apprehensions. It instantly occurred to her, that Lord Hastings had artfully contrived this method of discovering her real sentiments ;—the thought was agony.

On pronouncing this sentence,—“A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon, than love that would seem hid,”—he stopt, he sighed ; and venturing to steal a look at Louisa, saw her pale and breathless, just sinking from her chair. He flew to her, and catching her in his arms, prevented her from falling. Lady Granville, who was not an unconcerned spectator of this scene, assisted her son in carrying her out to the air.—“My love,” said she, “your long confinement in a sick room, has, I fear, injured your health. Indeed, Louisa, the journey to Bath, which Dr. Lewis urges, is not less necessary for you than myself.”

From that moment Louisa resolved to keep the strictest watch over herself ; and conscious of her inability to dissemble, to avoid for the future the company of Lord Hastings, with as much earnestness as she had formerly wished for it. He perceived the coldness and alteration in her manner ; but far from suspecting the real cause, with that diffidence which often accompanies true merit, and always genuine love, he sought for it in his own conduct ; some part of which, though unknown to himself, he feared had offended her.

The consciousness that haunted Louisa, when in company with him, gave her a feeling so exquisitely painful, that it even threw an air of peevishness into her conversation. When he inquired anxiously about her health, it increased her anguish and perplexity, by making her suspect that her secret distress was become apparent ; and every attempt to soothe her inquietude, carried in it, to her disordered imagination, the air of an insult.

Lord Hastings sought in vain to unravel the mystery of her behaviour ; he was convinced of her indifference ; he felt dissatisfied and unhappy ; but though he knew too well the cause of his inquietude, he was utterly unconscious of having done any thing to merit the anguish he suffered.

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

" YOUR tender solicitude to spare my anxiety, and reconcile me to my loss, merits my unfeigned acknowledgment. Oh, Adelaide ! I have indeed wept over the grave of my best friend ; but I have not, like you, buried there my hopes, wishes, and inquietudes. My bosom is not formed for the restless passions and pursuits of the world ; it relishes peace even more than pleasure. In a few days we set out for Bath ; and I confess to you, the prospect of mixing with the gay world, loads me with a dejection I cannot shake off. But, like the bee, I must strive to improve my little hour of life, and to extract honey from weeds as well as flowers. /

" Happily, my Adelaide, the eyes of imagination are not fettered by the laws that limit the corporeal

sense. Though many hundred miles now divide us, still I behold the friend of my heart, still do I partake with you the delightful solitude of St. Cire. I tread, in fancy, the same path we have often trod together ; the same trees which have witnessed our mutual expressions of friendship, seem to shade me ; and I still stop to listen to the same profound silence, which used to inspire us with a pleasing dread, whilst wandering through the cloisters by the pale lamp of evening. I look back with regret on those hours, Adelaide, which shall never, never return ! Hours, which we often suffered to elapse in vain regrets for their short duration. Such is the weakness, the inconsistency of human nature !—You would be equally unjust to your own merit and my friendship, did you believe that I could ever suffer your image to be banished from my heart. No, Adelaide ; others may engage my attention, or engross my time, but you will ever possess the confirmed esteem, and tender affection of

your faithful friend,

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

As Bath waters were thought necessary for re-establishing Lady Granville's health, she prepared to set out with her family, all of whom wished to attend her.

About a week before their departure, the Marquis of Winchester and his daughter came to congratulate Lady Granville on her recovery, and spend a few days at the Castle. Lady Charlotte, who had never seen Miss Seymour before, was so struck with her beauty, that she could not help expressing her

Delightful idea

Charlotte

admiration of it. Her admiration indeed was sincere, and unmingled with envy; but would probably have been attended with a feeling equally painful, had she not instantly perceived the coldness with which Louisa treated Lord Hastings, and recollected that the change in his manner took place before her return from France.

Nothing is more common than to see people of opposite tempers become fond of each other. In all connexions of the heart, there must be a similarity in taste and sentiment between the parties; but diversity of tempers, like diversity of musical tones, serve, when properly combined, to make the harmony more complete. The timid and reserved are relieved from the necessity of any painful exertions, by the frank and complacent, who derive a generous pleasure from the consciousness of bringing forth the merit of others to view, and of removing that veil which excessive modesty throws over their good qualities. These two ladies derived mutual pleasure and advantage from each other's society; and before they parted, Lady Charlotte intreated Louisa to write to her, in such pressing terms, as left her no pretence for declining a correspondence, which she, by no means thought herself qualified to support.

One day, when the two young ladies and Lord Hastings were walking in the garden, Lady Charlotte, with her usual vivacity, began to rally Miss Seymour on the number of conquests she would make at Bath. The conversation happening to turn on the marriage of a young lady there to a rich, disagreeable old miser, Louisa expressed her detestation of a conduct so interested, in the strongest

terms. "Very well," replied her lively friend, "all this is mighty pretty talking : Nay, I doubt not but you will carry your romantic folly so far, as to marry some gentle, generous youth, who believes himself as capable of living on love, and hope, and vows, and nonsense, as you do. But indeed, my dear girl, we mortals require some grosser aliment ; and I'll venture to wager, you shall be of my opinion before ten years are expired : Nay, perhaps, as many weeks at Bath will be sufficient to effect this marvellous change. Consider, child, you have never yet seen the world.— Oh ! you know not the dear delight of being followed, admired, and flattered ! Don't you think, my Lord, that Miss Seymour will soon be of my opinion ?"—" I should rather hope, Madam," replied he, gravely, " that the empty adulation of mere admirers, would serve to give Miss Seymour a juster value for the esteem and admiration of her real friends."

Though Lady Charlotte paid little attention to this speech, Louisa perfectly comprehended the meaning of it. Indeed, the whole of this conversation introduced into the minds of Lord Hastings and Miss Seymour, a train of ideas so unpleasing, that they were glad to put an end to it by returning to the Castle.

A few hours after the Marquis and his daughter went away, a genteel young woman demanded to see Miss Seymour alone, and was accordingly conducted to her apartment. It being then the dusk, Louisa could not see the face of the person who waited for her ; and was not a little alarmed on seeing her bolt the door, and then, falling on her

knees, burst into a flood of tears, accompanied with such violent agitation, as for a while robbed her of the power of utterance. Louisa begged to know what she wanted. "Oh, Miss Seymour," cried she, with a feeble voice, interrupted with sighs, "have you forgotten your once virtuous, once happy Sally Vernon?" "Good heavens! Sally," exclaimed Louisa, "is it you? But how came you here at this late hour?—Why have you left Cambridge?—What is the cause of your distress?"—"O!" continued the afflicted mourner, "why did you send me from you? You know, dear Miss Seymour, I was not a vain or giddy creature. Had I still been at Springwood, I would have been the happiest, as I am now the most miserable, of the human race."—She then proceeded, with much difficulty, to give Miss Seymour the melancholy relation contained in the following letter, which Louisa dispatched to her friend early next morning, before setting out for Bath:

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

"OUR correspondence, my dear Lady Charlotte, is about to commence in a manner I little thought of. I will make no apology for engaging you in an act of humanity, because I am persuaded I cannot give you a higher proof of my esteem, than soliciting a favour; or confer a greater obligation on you, than by putting it in your power to do good.

"The affair in which I am requesting your assistance, has given me inexpressible affliction. Perhaps you may remember to have seen at the Castle a beautiful young girl, named Sally Vernon, who

staid there some days at Lady Granville's desire, waiting my mother's return from France. She was the only child of a favourite servant, who dying, bequeathed her to my mother's care. Sally waited on me, till the loss of my father's fortune obliged us to dismiss all our supernumerary domestics. My worthy parent, unwilling to expose this innocent girl to the dangers of the world, placed her with a chamber millener at Cambridge. There she has continued for several years past, and behaved in a manner which gained her the affection of the whole family.

"Some time ago, a young gentleman, of the name of Talbot, called to look at some ruffles : He saw the unfortunate Sally, wrote several letters to her, pretending he was the son of a wealthy farmer in the next county ; and by various arts, prevailed on the unsuspecting girl to correspond with him, and listen to his addresses.

"I cannot pretend to give you all the particulars of this shocking affair ; I had them from her own lips, and spared her the painful relation. Suffice it to say, that in return for the most tender and confiding affection, he has betrayed her to ruin, and loaded her with shame.

"Oh, my dear Lady Charlotte ! how my heart swells with indignation against the perpetrator of this most cruel, this premeditated villainy !—What will become of this wretched orphan I know not. He set off a few days ago for France, without saying farewell, or leaving one guinea for her support, notwithstanding her present deplorable situation.—

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How mean, how despicable does vice render the human character!!

"She asked to see me alone yesterday; and after throwing herself at my feet, and ingenuously acknowledging her faults, which indeed would admit of many palliations, she conjured me, by the memory of my revered parent, to save her from infamy and want. Her words were few, but the eloquence of her distress was irresistible. I dismissed her with a promise of soon finding an asylum proper for her, and desired her to say to the millener, that having heard of something greatly to her advantage, I was about to remove her from Cambridge.

"It immediately occurred to me, that your good old nurse whom we visited together, would be a proper person for such a charge, especially as she has no family, and her cottage stands remote from any other.—If Sally's ill-fated infant sees the light, I can easily find a nurse for it in this neighbourhood.—Let me know if this plan meets with your approbation.

"Whatever line society is obliged to draw between the strictly virtuous of our sex and such as err, O let not us, my dear Lady Charlotte! be too rigid a regard to its laws, debar unhappy wanderers from again returning to the peaceful path from which they have unfortunately strayed.

"Your letter, which I shall impatiently expect, must be addressed to me at Bath. Adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Miss Seymour.

"I AM shocked beyond expression, my dear Miss Seymour, at your account of the credulous and unfortunate Sally. Poor girl! we must at least try to preserve her from public shame, if we cannot save her from self-reproach. Your plan meets my highest approbation, and shall have every assistance in my power. I shall willingly take her home hereafter to wait on myself.

"Ah, Louisa! should the gallows be erected for the thief and robber, whom necessity, perhaps, has impelled to deprive the rich of what they can easily spare, and ought voluntarily to bestow;....and shall no punishment be inflicted on him, who steals the affection of the gentle, unsuspecting heart, robs it of its innocence, and ruins its peace?—Yes, my friend! for such, punishment is prepared....a tribunal erected,....Conscience is the accuser, and God himself the Judge:—From his power and justice there is no escaping,---from his righteous sentence, there lies no appeal!

"Whence comes it, my friend, that men, who pride themselves on their integrity in their transactions with each other, should nevertheless hold themselves excusable for practising perpetual impositions on the whole race of females?—There must certainly be some physical cause of this, for in morals there is none.—I would apply to philosophers for a solution of this enigma—but, alas! are not philosophers men? and will not they then impose some fallacy upon us?—Indubitably they will. Upon a little reflection, however, I cease to wonder at it:

"That power confers right," is a favourite maxim with that tender-conscienced sex ; and from hence they derive their title, to enslave one part of their species, and cheat the other.

"I cannot express my admiration of your noble sentiments, and generous conduct, so superior to vulgar prejudice, and to the weakness of our sex in particular. May your humanity be its own reward, and your exemplary goodness lead others to emulate your conduct.—Adieu !—try to shake off a little of your monastic gravity ; it is unnatural at your early age. I shall dispense with your tasting the waters at Bath ; but I insist on your taking a Lethæan draught of its pleasures, that, like those who frequent it, you may forget, or seem to forget, all your cares ! Impress your memory, however, at all times, with the assurance that I love you ; and never forget

Your admiring friend,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

"IN what terms shall I thank my dear Lady Charlotte, for her ready concurrence with my plan for poor Sally ! I have written, to acquaint her with your intended goodness, of taking her hereafter into your own service : I dare answer for her gratitude, and will trust to you for having her conveyed privately to ———, as soon as possible.

"I fear my conduct in this affair has not been so disinterested as you suppose : Your approbation

I have looked to as part of my reward ; and, perhaps, even the indulgence of benevolence has self-gratification in view.—Were we at due pains, my dear friend, to examine the motives of our actions, we would often have cause to blush for those, on account of which we proudly arrogate to ourselves the praise due to superior merit.

“ Though I wish to obey you in all things, I shall find it impossible to forget my cares in the midst of a scene so full of them. Here, care takes possession of all ranks and denominations : The young care for amusement, and the old for money—the gay care for drefs, and the serious for cards—the handsome care for admirers, and the ugly for want of them—the coquets care for coxcombs, and the coxcombs for coquets—the women care for every thing, and the men for nothing but—their-selves. For my part, instead of casting away care, I have got a huge addition to my former stock—the care of pleasing you ; which I am so anxious to do, that, knowing affection to be of an assimilating nature, I am striving to imitate you ; and, in hope of making you what you have never appeared to be—fond of yourself—am encroaching on your province, and affecting your style. Do not be afraid, however, that I shall rival you in it : I am so awkward an impostor, that every child might detect the cheat.

“ The only thing of which every person here seems careless, is that health, which they profess to make the sole object of their care. One, I shall ever anxiously preserve.....that of endeavouring to merit your friendship, and to justify to the world your kind partiality for me. Perhaps, in this in-

stance alone, your judgment could ever be called in question : Be it my constant care to vindicate it. Adieu."

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

" I NOW address my beloved friend, from the very centre of fashion and folly. Is this then the world, so much desired, so eagerly pursued, at the expense of health, peace....nay, even virtue itself? —Ah, my Adelaide ! it has no charms for me ; it never will have.

" I am alarmed and disconcerted at every step : I am disgusted with the extravagant levity of the women, and the fulsome adulation of the men ; who, in praising others, seem to be wholly engrossed by the care of displaying their own talents, and placing their superficial accomplishments in the most advantageous light.—That indiscriminating politeness, which the courtesy of the world dignifies with the title of good-breeding, appears to me to be nothing better than a refined species of hypocrisy. I shrink from the view of those harsh and unamiable qualities, which the generality of our species are neither at pains to correct nor conceal ; and seek in vain for the beloved circle of friends, with whom I am accustomed to converse with freedom and delight, in the quiet of the country. " My heart is ever ready to speak, but there are none to hear or answer it : " All here seem to have but one care, one object, one idol—and that is self—to whom they pay unceasing homage.

" How thankful to Providence ought we to be, my Adelaide, who hath preserved our hearts from

being corrupted by the world !—who hath endowed them with feelings too exalted, too refined, to be comprehended by those who are enslaved by fashion, and whose taste is depraved by vice and luxury !—How thankful, that the view of the sublime, the useful, and the beautiful, both in the natural and moral world, excites in our souls the most pure pleasure, the most devout gratitude, the most lively adoration and praise !—These are emotions at once exquisite and ennobling ! Emotions which, alas ! are but little known to the bulk of our species !—Pleasures which escape the regards even of those who profess no other pursuit but pleasure ! Reserved by God himself for those who love him—by rightly loving themselves ; who fear him—by fearing to commit what is offensive to him ; and who obey him—by following the best instincts of nature, the clearest deductions of reason ; all which coincide with our only unerring guide, the divine light of revelation.

“ Your friendship for me, Adelaide, gives me a jealousy of myself, to which I was formerly a stranger. She who hopes to maintain a place in that heart, where such noble candour, generosity, and friendship inhabit, ought to possess no vulgar share of these virtues. I fear to be unjust to a friendship like your's, by admitting another candidate for mine ; yet, after all, my Adelaide, I feel, that though I may esteem and admire others for various good qualities, you, and you alone, are the friend of my heart.

“ About a week before we set out for Bath, the Marquis of Winchester, who has a fine seat in this neighbourhood, came with his daughter, to spend

some days with Lord and Lady Granville.—I have never seen more dignity and grace united, than in Lady Charlotte Villiers : She is extremely handsome, and possesses a ready wit, which, as it is never displayed either to attract admiration, or give unnecessary pain, has the effect of rendering her conversation in the highest degree entertaining. She distinguishes me by her notice ; and, when we parted, solicited my friendship and correspondence, in a manner truly pleasing and which did me much honour. But shall I confess to my Adelaide, I feel more admiration than complacency for Lady Charlotte ? I cannot shake off the restraint which difference of rank imposes ; and, through the nobleness of her sentiments, I can yet perceive that she values herself on the superiority of her birth. Besides, though highly accomplished, and extremely agreeable, Lady Charlotte wants that irresistible charm which sensibility adds to the female character. She sometimes amuses herself with laughing at the guiltless weaknesses of her species, but never exposes them to public view. She despises popularity, and testifies her friendship, by placing your foibles in a light at once so striking and ridiculous, that, being neither able to excuse nor deny, you have no way left but to abjure them.

“ I often draw a comparison between my beloved friend, and this admired beauty : Her perfections, like the meridian sun, dazzle and fatigue the sight.—Your’s, my Adelaide, resemble the soft, mild lustre of the queen of heaven, whose charming aspect we used to contemplate together, with such ineffable delight, in the gardens of St. Cirq.—Oh ! with what pleasing melancholy, what tender regret, do I recall the hours spent there !—Is there not, my be-

loved friend, something inexplicable in these sadly soothing frames of mind, when it pleases us to be pained, and when sorrow is mingled with satisfaction ?

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

Soon after the arrival of the Granville family at Bath, they went to visit the rooms. Whilst they were walking there, a lady entered, leaning on a genteel young man, both in deep mourning ; whom Louisa instantly discovered to be her travelling companions, Mrs. Stanhope, and her son. They mutually expressed their satisfaction on occasion of this unexpected meeting ; and Mr. Stanhope, with marks of the tenderest sensibility, condoled with Louisa on the loss she had sustained, acquainting her at the same time with the death of his father, which had likewise happened since they parted at Dover.

As Miss Seymour looked very pale and dejected, he could not help expressing great solicitude about her health, the loss of which he feared had induced her to visit Bath at that unfashionable season. Louisa, after proper acknowledgments, and informing him of the cause of her journey, turning to Lady Granville, " Permit me, Madam," said she, " to introduce Mrs. Stanhope and her son to your acquaintance ; their merit claims your esteem, and my obligations to their kindness will secure them your friendship."

Lord Hastings, from the opposite side of the room, had observed with attention the pleasing surprise Louisa expressed on seeing Mr. Stanhope.

He came up to them at the moment she uttered the last sentence, and was lost in amazement at her speech, the import of which he could not possibly comprehend, as he had not heard the name of Stanhope, and knew of no friends with whom Miss Seymour could be on so familiar a footing.

He soon observed the constant and pointed attention paid her by Mr. Stanhope, which she received with the sweetest complacency; and jealousy was now added to the other restless passions that distracted his soul. But, though divided by turns between fear, suspense, and jealousy, love maintained its empire there. Louisa appeared with superior advantages in every new point of light. Modesty, humility, and ingenuity, were the constant inmates of her gentle bosom; and she appeared with the same unconscious sweetness, and dignified composure, in public crouds of the gay and the dissipated, as when seated in the private circle of her chosen friends.

As soon as they returned home, Lord Hastings inquired eagerly after the name and quality of the strangers. Louisa readily informed him; and at the same time mentioned the kindness shewn by them to her mother, in terms of such lively gratitude, as excited his envy, and confirmed his suspicions.

Louisa observed, with extreme pain, the uneasiness of his mind, and depression of his spirits.—The diffidence of his manner, whenever he addressed her, and the respectful attention with which he treated her, convinced her, that she had injured him by her former suspicions. No sooner did her judg-

ment make this concession, that her heart eagerly seized it, to justify a thousand little kindnesses, which she thought were due to a passion so tender and disinterested as that of Lord Hastings.

To Miss Stymour.

"THERE is a tender pleasure, my Louisa, in reflecting, that, perhaps at the same instant, though divided by many hundred miles, the same glowing affection is animating our hearts, the same pleasing task employing our hands.

"Believe me, it is with real satisfaction I hear of your forming new intimacies : Do not be afraid, my amiable, my ingenuous friend, to admit Lady Charlotte to a share of your affection : I am confident I shall not be a loser on that account. You cannot be unjust ; and the unequalled fondness I bear you, is my security for the strength and constancy of your attachment.—Long accustomed to the study of those valuable characters who compose our favourite circle, and who are all the world to us, we come at length to believe, that within this circle is comprised all that is valuable in the world. Friendship annihilates their foibles and magnifies their virtues : Others lose greatly by comparison ; and hence the social and benevolent affections come at length to be confined to a sphere far too narrow and limited for their healthful exercise. Intimacy with a variety of characters gives the mind more enlarged ideas, and a more liberal turn ; and by discovering various great and good qualities in individuals, we are induced to give credit to our species for many more which we want opportunity to develop.

“ Let me warn my beloved friend against cherishing that false delicacy and excessive refinement which would wholly unfit her for commerce with the world, and that station which Providence hath assigned her there. Philanthropy, in some measure, conforms the human to the divine nature : Though there are harsh features in some characters, there are good qualities in all ; and though the vices of individuals excite a virtuous indignation for our species, as a collective body, let us ever cherish the sweet glow of benevolence.

“ Though sensibility adds grace to virtue, if it becomes so exquisite as to occasion more pain and disgust than pleasure to its possessor, it can no longer be regarded as a blessing. Approbation is a pleasant sentiment ; but it is a real misfortune to have acquired that degree of refinement, which gives us a disrelish for the ordinary pursuits and satisfactions of life.—When we enter the great theatre of the world, we find two representations of human life : One, the work of imagination, a young, giddy enthusiast,—the other, that of experience, a sober, skilful artist. The first presents you only with exaggerated features, deceitful proportions, and random strokes, which confound and mislead the judgment. In the work of the other, light and shade are judiciously blended ; and through the whole you may trace beauty, symmetry, and design : Every feature is mellowed by time ; and if you are not dazzled with its lustre, neither will you be disgusted with its faults.

“ To view this picture in the fairest light ; in other words, to make the best of every thing, is the great art of life.”

To Miss Seymour.

("PROFESSIONS of esteem and affection are among those truths which we find so agreeable to the interests of self-love, that we seldom incline to question their sincerity.) Your's I receive with implicit faith, and hold them as sacred as my creed, in spite of surly conscience, who cavils at the foundation on which they are built.—I wish, Louisa, you would get rid of that antiquated, useless virtue, modesty, which every body admires, and nobody rewards. How often shall I assure you, that your letters give me pleasure ;—that I peruse them with eagerness ;—that I sigh when I come to their close ? Oh ! I anticipate your malicious inference ; but I assure you, it is the shortness, not length, of your letters, which occasions my sighing. Perhaps, I ought rather to applaud, than blame your generous caution ; you know sweet morsels are apt to pall, and tremble lest you should give me a surfeit.

"With that diffidence which always accompanies genuine merit, you disclaim the praise due to your late conduct to poor Sally, and alledge that your generosity proceeded from a desire to indulge yourself. You wrong yourself, my Louisa ; pleasure has been the reward, whilst virtue was the source of your conduct.

"I know there are some who arrogate to themselves the title of Philosophers, but who, in fact, are no lovers of wisdom, but mere lovers of paradox, that derive all our actions from the selfish principle. Let us detect the fallacy. No man could rightly

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estimate the pleasure of goodness, till he had himself been good. From what motive then arose the first benevolent action?

"Again, you affirm that your charity was not disinterested, because you hoped by it to obtain my approbation. Our actions, my dear Miss Seymour, are seldom the result of a single principle, but flow from a complex variety of motives. To wish for the approbation of the good, is at least innocent, and cannot therefore contaminate the action to which it gives rise. And although your charity may have looked to this as a part of its reward, yet a deed which in part was prompted by compassion, is not therefore to be stripped quite naked of merit. Let us guard against pride, by an impartial examination of the hidden springs of our conduct; but let us shun also too severe a scrutiny, lest deprived of the support of self-approbation, the vigour of our minds fail, for want of that reviving cordial which our benignant Creator hath provided as an encouragement to perseverance in virtue.

"You tell me, 'you are surpris'd that a person 'with my advantages, and living so much in the 'gay world, should have nothing of the coquette 'in her disposition.'-----To my father, Louisa, I am indebted for this. Deprived in infancy of my mother, his whole attention has been bestowed on me, and I have been his constant companion from a child.

"He knows human nature; and having made my temper his peculiar study, took advantage of my high spirit, to inspire me early with the lauda-

ble ambition of excelling in mental, rather than personal qualifications. He opposed one passion to another, and taught the pride of superior intelligence to combat the rage for admiration.

"Perhaps you will think he has still much to conquer, when, in the course of one letter, I can betray two foibles, vanity and loquacity.—See the confidence I have in your friendship !

"Though your last very flattering letter would not perhaps have gratified the very learned and curious Athenians, who delighted chiefly in hearing something new, yet it contained some old truths which one never tires of hearing. Repeat them often, my dear Louisa ; and be assured, that to obtain your affection and esteem, will gratify the highest ambition of

Your sincere, though aspiring friend,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

"YOU rally me, my dear Lady Charlotte, on my seriousness and love of retirement, which you term unnatural at my age. The truth is, though we may live in the world without adopting its prejudices, or being corrupted by its vices, we can hardly avoid being conformed to its customs and manners, which are utterly repugnant both to my principles and taste.

"The absurdity of these will not strike your mind, because they have long been familiar to you ;

but permit me to ask, what can be more unnatural, ridiculous, disingenuous, and even criminal, than the whole life and conduct of a fine Lady!—Let me attempt the picture: At the expense of health and duty, she wastes in sleep or sloth those still, serene, delightful hours, which ought to be devoted to the improvement of her mind and regulation of her family. She gets up with uneasy reflections on the losses, disappointments, and mortifications of the preceding day; or else with no reflections at all. Her temper is fretted during the tedious duties of the toilette, by discovering in her face the sure, though silent, ravages of time and dissipation. Chagrined with herself, she vents her ill-humour indiscriminately on all who approach her; and her caprice and injustice teach even her children and domestics to despise her. Utterly ignorant of happiness, she wastes the precious hours of life in vainly contriving the means of rendering them happy. To dissipate that time, which she knows not to enjoy, yet whose silent lapse she marks with terror, and deplotes with anguish, she sets out on a round of visits, in full confidence of being denied admittance by all who call themselves her friends, and whom she would indeed rank as enemies, did they consent to see her. But if, by some unfortunate mistake, their doors are opened to receive her, she execrates the fault; and with consummate art, and heroic dissimulation, instantly converts her frowns into smiles, and flies with open arms to meet the very person, whom in her heart she hates, despises, envies, and defames.—Company joins her at her superb, but joyless and inhospitable meal. There, want of confidence and esteem throws restraint and coldness into conversation; for where there is no mutual desire to please and be pleased, disgust and

indifference must take place of social intercourse, harmony, and cheerfulness. Public amusements fill up the tedious night ; Amusements ! grown not only tasteless but burthensome by repetition. (Frivolous conversation, unmeaning gallantry, insipid pleasures, and ruinous gaming, sum up the joys of a fine lady.)—She may, indeed, be said to walk in a vain show ; for her life is a train of unsuccessful deceit, which cannot impose upon the world, and which neither promotes her interest nor comfort. Her rankling passions increase with her years ; her heart is the receptacle of pride, envy, malevolence, and disgust :—Her youth is wasted in folly, her age has no friends : she lives without enjoyment, she dies without hope !

“ Perhaps, my dear Lady Charlotte, you think me too severe. Believe me, it was Truth that guided the pencil, and Experience that finished the piece. The glowing colours of imagination had no place there.

“ I confess I am shocked and disgusted beyond expression with the levity, and even rudeness, of those, who call themselves the polite world. Would you believe it, I have been frequently ridiculed here, for my present mourning habit ? The only outward testimony I can give, of that reverence I shall ever feel, for the memory of the best of mothers !

“ Two young ladies of fashion stood near me last night ; when, after disconcerting me extremely, by scanning me from head to foot, with looks of ineffable contempt, “ This deep mourning for a mother,” said one of them, “ who has already been dead two months, is absurd affectation.”—“ Ah,

my dear," replied the other, "this mushroom beauty, whom nobody knows, is not so ignorant as not to perceive the effect black has, in heightening the delicacy of such a skin and complexion."

"I am not conscious of being vain or conceited, Lady Charlotte; but if I am, this is not the proper way of correcting me.—I will not allow myself, however, to feel lasting resentment, where, perhaps, no insult was intended. These young ladies were not conscious of the pain they were inflicting; and, besides—they had not lost a mother!—With respect to changing my dress, I shall not regulate my conduct by their opinion. I can never regard the practice of wearing mourning solely in the light of compliance with custom: It seems intended as a security against those wounds, which a heart, yet sore from recent distress, would feel, from witnessing the extravagance of mirth, or thoughtlessness of levity.—Intemperate must that mind be, which the presence of a person, whose countenance and habit express the real mourner, will not awe for a little into something like seriousness.—Another custom, too, prevails in the world, which I think both cruel and unnecessary—That of admitting into the presence of one in deep affliction, all those who, under the pretence of sympathy, seek only to gratify an impertinent and most disgusting curiosity. None but those who intimately know the heart, are qualified deeply to sympathise in its sorrows; and the sorrows of the heart are of too sacred a nature to be laid open to the inspection of every superficial acquaintance and idle visitor.

"Adieu, my dear Lady Charlotte; the friendship with which you honour me, gives me a right

to share in both the pains and pleasures of yours. To alleviate the one, and augment the other, will ever add to the enjoyment of

Your sincere friend,

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Miss Seymour.

"YOU tell me, my amiable friend, that my letters at once amuse and delight you: I can easily believe that a heart so tender, will find sensible pleasure in sympathizing in the feelings of mine; but indeed, Louisa, the quiet and uniform tenour of the conventional life, furnishes but very few topics of amusement.—There is nothing, however, from which a contemplative mind may not derive instruction. Whether we confine our views to earth, or raise them to heaven, we shall find new cause to admire the wisdom and extol the goodness of the Creator, God!

"Like you, I am a passionate admirer of the simple beauties of nature. Artless expressions are ever the most pathetic; and therefore those objects which owe their charms to nature alone, are most in harmony with my present feelings.—But whilst we, my friend, felicitate ourselves on possessing a taste which can derive pleasure from so many sources, ought we not to adore that Being, who, attentive not only to the necessities, but enjoyment of his creatures, hath adjusted these to their various capacities of happiness?

"The scenes, my Louisa, which contribute to my instruction, as well as pleasure, are those to which I most frequently resort. The weak state of my health making change of air necessary, my mother, with permission of the Abbess, has brought me once more to the scenes of my earliest, happiest years. With what mournful pleasure, what tender regret, do I look back on those years !—Happy ! healthful ! and innocent !—Ah ! my friend, how ignorant are we then of the value of these blessings ! It is not till the streams of prosperity are dried up, that we are sensible how plenteously they have flowed : mine, Louisa, are cut off forever !

"Nothing presents a more striking emblem of time, than a silent and smooth-flowing river ; such as that I have just been contemplating. To the careless and inattentive eye, it seems always the same ; but the various portions of which it is composed, are gliding imperceptibly away, whilst the little flowerets that enamel its banks, and which it matures in its course, are likewise secretly undermined by its current.

"But a few months are passed, since we traced together the course of this river : its waters were then pure and transparent ;—we admired its beauty, and were refreshed with its coolness. How is the scene changed !. Swollen by a torrent of descending rains, it hath burst its bounds ; and, dark, troubled, impetuous, it rolls along, involving, in its wasteful progress, every herb and flower which it formerly nourished !—So fares it with the human soul.—There, whilst the affections flow in their smooth and natural course, the seeds of virtue spring, and its flowers blossom. But no sooner does the storm

of passion arise, than every noble thought, and generous wish, and useful aim, are violently swept away into the gulph of oblivion !

“ Be it our care, my Louisa, to preserve the stream of our affections pure from every stain ; and to cherish those virtues which heaven hath committed to our care, till they shall grow up to beauty and perfection, and be transplanted to a milder clime, where they shall imbibe the rays of a never-setting Sun, and flourish, with increasing strength, beauty and vigour, for ever !

“ Adieu, my amiable friend—Let us think oftener of the blessings which remain, than of those which are taken away from us ; and of the calamities we escape, than on the slight evils we are obliged a little while to endure.—Adieu.”

To Miss Seymour.

—“ WELL, Louisa, I shall positively become a convert to modern philosophy, if I continue long in this world ; and, disclaiming all confidence in the testimony of my senses, believe that there is nothing real in the universe,—but that all we see, and hear, and act, is nothing more than a bundle of fallacious impressions, inconceivable ideas, unperceivable perceptions, and I know not what.

“ Do you know I have for ever offended Miss —, by my reserved behaviour yesterday. You may remember, when she left the country, she was a little, thin, red-haired, puny girl ;—but mark what metamorphoses one winter in London produces !—

Not Ovid, nay, not Circe herself, could effect what lead-combs, paint, and powder achieve in that mart of vanity and school of deceit.—I was surprised to be addressed yesterday, on coming out of church, by a stranger, in a manner so vulgarly familiar, as quite shocked me. It was a tall, rosy, brisk, bourgeois figure, with dark eye-brows and chestnut hair ; and whom I should just as soon have taken for the Cham of Tartary as Miss ——.

“ Pray, my dear, do you think in your conscience, that one is obliged to know one’s friends under such disguises ? Who shall hereafter pretend to determine on identity of person, when it is in the power of the milliner, mantua-maker, perfumer, and friseur, to new-model and make us just what they please ?

“ You have drawn such a true, but shocking picture of fashionable life, that I am terrified with the view of it ;—and now, being heartily sick of this world, and not quite ready for a better, you must positively reconcile me to my allotted station here, by giving me, in opposition to the “unnatural, ridiculous, disingenuous, and criminal character of a woman of fashion,” a just representation of what you deem a natural, proper, agreeable, and virtuous tenor of conduct ;—in other words, the picture of an unfashionable woman.

“ Having succeeded so happily in your portrait of a fine lady, I must insist on immediately seeing her counterpart—a lifeless, sober, insipid dowdy, I suppose, commonly called ‘a good sort of woman ;’ but, in my opinion, the worst woman in the world—who tires one to death with relating facts which

every body knows,—affirming truths which nobody disputes,—descanting on characters which nobody cares for,—and proving herself, beyond dispute, a woman good for nothing but plain work, cookery, and breeding.

“Like your fine lady, and every body who is displeased with themselves, I can be pleased with nothing besides. Hasten then to restore me to temper, by a more agreeable picture than that you have set before me. Ah! Louisa, though Bath doubtless contains many such caricatures as you represent, it is at Bath, at present I would look for virtue in her fairest form.....You need not take that trouble; for in some cases you are so obstinately blind, that I know you will never discover her, under the veil which modesty throws over every perfection of that object, who is often present to the thoughts, and always dear to the heart, of her

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“YOU are resolved to punish me for my presumption, my dear Lady Charlotte, by imposing on me a task, to which I am by no means equal.—Your approbation flatters me exceedingly; but beware how you nourish my self-conceit. I may dispute my own merit, but cannot question your judgment; and your influence over mine, renders you in some measure responsible for my conduct.—Though my power to amuse you is very limited, my inclination to oblige you is boundless: As a proof

of it, at your desire, I resume my pen, in order to delineate, in the best manner I can, my idea of a reasonable woman.

“ Your model of a good sort of woman is every where to be found ; but where are we to look for a reasonable one ? Perhaps you will alledge it has no existence but in my own imagination. Let us try at least, my admired friend, by our conduct, to realize it.

“ After a night of healthful repose, the reasonable woman rises in that happy, tranquil frame of mind, which results from pleasant reflections on the past day, and anticipating the temperate pleasures and important duties of the commencing one. Its first moments are devoted as due to that Being whom she regards with filial love, gratitude, and reverence ; and whom she approaches, not with the lifeless prostrations of fear, but with the devout and cheerful homage of the heart. Before engaging in domestic cares, she prepares her mind for meeting with firmness, or bearing with patience, the little rubs and vexations of the day : She plans a thousand schemes of benevolence and utility ; and the good she cannot perform, but generously intends, is recorded in Heaven as virtue.—The time necessarily spent at her toilette, is short ; it is, however, rendered pleasing by the delightful hope of becoming, by means of its adventitious aids, more agreeable in the eyes of a husband, whom she loves too tenderly to omit a single opportunity of complying with his taste, or confirming his esteem.—Books, work, and above all, the important duty of impressing the infant minds of her children with that love of goodness which insensibly leads to the

practice of it, fill up the rest of the morning.—Through the day, she checks the little fallies of her own temper, and, unobserved, steals from others, by the influence of her good humour, every disquieting care. To them her time, her taste, are often sacrificed ; but conscious benevolence does more than repay her.—Her conversation, equally remote from chilling reserve and petulant loquacity, has no aim, but to instruct or amuse ; and in her care to please others, she seems wholly to forget herself.—Her elegant, yet frugal board, presents a striking emblem of her mind. There, plenty is seen without profusion, and neatness without ostentation. Good taste, good breeding, good sense, and mild complacency, teach her guests to forget they are strangers, and to feel they are friends.—Her husband beholds her with mingled pride and pleasure ; and his approbation, though silent, diffuses joy through her heart, and cheerfulness through her conversation.—The evening is passed amidst the chosen circle, with whom she knows no reserves, and whose accumulated happiness becomes her own. Conversation, if useful or agreeable, is encouraged ; if dull, relieved by the aids which the fine arts supply to those who cultivate them. Music, dancing, cards, are occasionally called in ; and even those amusements for which she has no relish herself, she cheerfully adopts, in the hope of contributing to the enjoyment of others.—Public diversions are sometimes visited, but always tend with the reasonable woman to increase her love of social and domestic pleasures.—When in public, she appears with propriety and modesty. She envies not beauty,—she covets not grandeur,—she seeks not to engage attention ; for, in the pleasing consciousness

of discharging her duty, in the love of her husband, and esteem of her friends, she finds complete happiness. Such is a reasonable woman! The very opposite of a fashionable one. If we hesitate to which to give the preference, we may, perhaps, with much propriety deserve to be ranked in the latter class; but we certainly can form no pretensions to the name or character of the former.

"After all, my dear Lady Charlotte, is it not astonishing that we are at so little pains to become reasonable women? We, whose limited and domestic situation renders the cultivation of the lesser morals, the mild and gentle virtues, essential to our comfort? There are few people who are not capable of great and generous actions, when they know by them they will excite admiration and obtain applause; but in private life, where our virtues pass unheeded, we are at little pains to become disinterested, benevolent, or self-denied. It is in private life, however, that opportunities are constantly occurring for the exercise of these virtues, and where we can at once witness and profit by their effects: But mankind, in general, prefer the unmeaning voice of the multitude to the soothing approbation of their own minds.

"Adieu, my friend! If I continue to moralize any longer, you will with justice pronounce me, a most UNREASONABLE WOMAN.

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

About this time, Mr. Valois, a very eminent miniature painter, arriving at Bath, Lady Granville

felt the strongest desire to have a picture of her son, as the time fixed for his going abroad fast approached.

When she made this request to Lord Hastings, he expressed the greatest reluctance to having his likeness taken at that time; conscious, perhaps, that the state of his mind was not such as would give an agreeable expression to his features. Miss Seymour was not present when this subject was mentioned. On entering the room, "Come hither, my dear Louisa," said Lady Granville, "and help me to persuade this perverse son of mine to do his duty: Sure I am he can never have a fitter pattern or more able instructor. This is the first time he ever opposed my will; and as he can form no reasonable pretext for his non-compliance, I am resolved to assert the prerogative of a mother, and insist on his immediate performance of his duty; or else I shall certainly punish him as a rebel."

Louisa's colour went and came during this speech, the meaning of which it was impossible for her to divine. Looking first at Lady Granville, and then at Lord Hastings, her timid eyes seemed to demand an explanation of it. "My mother is very desirous, Miss Seymour," said he, "of having my picture; but there is only one condition that will prevail on me to submit to this tiresome operation. You must set the example of my duty, and reward me for performing it, by having your own done at the same time."

Lady Granville was not aware of the consequence of her request, else her prudence would have pre-

vented her from making it. Several circumstances combined to persuade her, that Lord Hastings took a more lively interest in her young favourite, than she thought consistent, either with his present ease or future prospects. She could not avoid, however, seconding her son's proposal, and added, with equal prudence and politeness, "I shall envy nobody when I shall have two such pleasant friends in my possession."—Lord Hastings urged his request with a warmth and importunity that exceedingly disconcerted Louisa. Ever fearful of betraying her secret sentiments, though she knew not how to refuse, she greatly dreaded complying; but in this instance her prudence was overborne, by her strong inclination to oblige him. Though Lord Hastings remarked her hesitation, and embarrassment, without knowing the cause, he was sensibly gratified by her obliging compliance.

The coach was immediately ordered, and they drove to the lodgings of Mr. Valois; who being then disengaged, begged leave to take the outlines of the two pictures, as his time at Bath was very uncertain.

A little dispute now arose between Miss Seymour and Lord Hastings, with respect to who should sit first. Louisa said, that as Mr. Valois's time was uncertain, it was undoubtedly proper, that the picture of Lord Hastings should be first finished; but he, recurring to his mother's speech, insisted on her setting the example. This little altercation gave an agreeable heightening to the delicate complexion of Louisa. As she was dressed in a large mourning cap, the painter found it necessary to have it removed, in order to obtain a full view of her cheek, as

she was to be drawn in profile. This trifling circumstance exceedingly disconcerted the modest and gentle Louisa, whose elegant mind was exquisitely sensible to every feeling of propriety. She looked abashed, her colour increased; Lady Granville saw her embarrassment; and in order to relieve it, "Come, my love," said she, "we will retire a moment, and I will myself try to perform the office of friseur: Mr. Valois will excuse me, though I should not prove very dexterous in my new profession."

During their short absence, the scene in the park at Springwood occurred to the memory of Lord Hastings. He was seized with the most passionate desire to have Louisa drawn in the very attitude in which he had beheld her at the grave of her mother. Afraid of the penetrating eyes of his own, he had not courage to propose it; and not having a moment to lose,—“As this Lady, Sir,” said he, “is in the habit of a mourner, I should imagine the attitude most favourable for the character of her face would be that of devotion.” The painter being perfectly of his opinion, he proposed on return of the ladies, that Miss Seymour should take a seat near the window, and fix her eyes on the ceiling for a few minutes.

What were the agitating emotions which Lord Hastings experienced during their progress! An association of ideas, altogether delightful, occupied his mind, and his eyes were rivetted to a face, whose whole loveliness he had never till that time had an opportunity of observing.—Her fine chestnut hair, contrasted with the whiteness and delicacy of her

skin, and the glow of exquisite sensibility, occasioned by the novelty of her situation, rendered her so inimitably beautiful, that the artist, as well as the lover, was rapt in silent admiration.

She arose, and Lord Hastings unwillingly took her place.—Some difficulty now occurred about the attitude in which he should be drawn; the painter having remarked the uncommon and animated expression of his fine eyes, requested permission to take his full face.

No time could have been more favourable to do justice both to the excellency of the subject and skill of the artist. The countenance of Lord Hastings was lighted up by a variety of the sweetest and most tender sensations; and the object on whom his eyes were chiefly fixed was not likely to dissipate them.

The pictures were finished, and met with universal approbation. But as they were confessedly the most beautiful and highly finished pieces in his collection, Mr. Valois begged permission to detain them a little while in his possession, as they did him much credit by being shewn. One morning, when Mrs. Stanhope called to take Miss Seymour out an airing, she expressed the greatest curiosity to see the pictures, on which, she said, she heard the highest encomiums lavished wherever she went. Accordingly, they drove to the painter's, who appeared to be extremely hurried.—“I have just received accounts, Madam,” said he to Miss Seymour, “of the death of a relation, which obliges me to set out this very night for London. I was

about to send the pictures, but perhaps you will take the trouble of carrying them home yourself." Louisa took out her purse; but Mr. Valois prevented her, by saying they were already paid for. Then stepping to the table, and taking out of the drawer a little sealed packet, he said, in a low voice, "May I beg, Madam, that you will have the goodness to present this to Lord Hastings, when nobody is present."——The astonished Louisa hesitated a moment, not knowing what answer to make, but afraid of being observed by her companion, she put it hastily into her pocket. Her desire to know the contents of this little parcel was extreme, but it proceeded not from curiosity alone; a sentiment a thousand times more powerful, more irresistible, excited it. She shuddered at the bare idea of doing a mean or dishonourable action; she determined to conquer her present temptation to it; but an accident instantly occurred, that left her no time for hesitating about what conduct she ought to pursue. Having set down Mrs. Stanhope at her own lodgings, she proceeded in her coach to those of Lord Granville; on stepping out, the foot-board being much lower than that to which she was accustomed, her foot slipped, and she fell to the ground with violence. The bustle this accident occasioned in the hall reached Lord Hastings, who, on hearing Louisa's voice, flew to her assistance. On seeing her pale and trembling, "Good heaven, Miss Seymour," cried he, eagerly, "what is the matter?" "Nothing at all, my Lord," answered she, smiling, but with a voice still faltering with fear and agitation; "indeed, I shall be quite well presently." He supported her into the parlour, and spoke to her in a manner, and with a tone so softened with com-

passion, that she was tempted to regret she had for little excuse for exciting it. As Lady Granville was abroad, he contrived, under pretence of giving her time to recover from the shock she had got by her fall, to detain her in the parlour for half an hour; during which, an interesting conversation took place; and he found opportunity of testifying to her those watchful and quiet attentions that flow directly from the heart, and of which the heart knows the full value.

Though there never could have been a more favourable opportunity than the present for complying with the request of the painter, Louisa could not find courage to give Lord Hastings the packet herself; but delayed fixing on the proper means of conveying it to him till she should reach her own apartment. As soon as she did so, she took it out of her pocket; and discovered, with great emotion, that the seal had been broken by her fall. Her curiosity now became irresistible.—“Surely,” whispered she to herself, “there can be nothing in a parcel from Mr. Valois to Lord Hastings that I may not see!”—In any other instance but this, Miss Seymour would have argued in a different manner. Too well do we know how reason will weigh, and judgment determine, when inclination holds the balance.—She unfolded a paper, in which was a picture sealed up, and an open billet containing these words:

“I HAVE strictly observed your Lordship’s injunctions; no eye but my own has seen this picture. I have folded the hands in the form of adoration, as you directed, and think the whole piece im-

proved by this circumstance. Your Lordship's generous present I accept with gratitude, as a proof that my labours have obtained your approbation.

"I am, my Lord, with respect and esteem,

Your Lordship's

Obliged, humble servant,

J. VALOIS."

Whilst Louisa perused this billet she was seized with such a faintish sickness, and her hand trembled so violently, that for some minutes she was unable to unclasp the picture. At last she did so; and with a feeling of mingled delight and astonishment, perceived that it was a copy of her own.

The pure and animated pleasure with which this discovery inspired the gentle bosom of Louisa, is not to be described. She now indulged, without restraint, the enchanting conviction, that she was beloved; and the soothing hope of being one day at liberty to avow to the deserving object of her tenderness, those sentiments which at present she so carefully concealed. She grudged every moment till the picture should be in the possession of Lord Hastings; yet knew not how to convey it to him, without incurring suspicion of having herself been the bearer. Consciousness made her cowardly; and in her eagerness to contrive the means of executing her purpose and avoiding suspicion, she overlooked the one least liable to it.—At length it occurred to her thoughts.—"O!" whispered she, as she wrapt up the picture, "may this lifeless image

often recal me to his memory, and preserve me a place in his heart, during the long, long hours of absence ! Would it could convey to that heart the tender gratitude of mine !”

Recollecting that there could be no danger of any eclaireissement between Lord Hastings and Mr. Valois, she inclosed the letter and picture in a blank cover ; and ringing for her maid, desired her to give the parcel to Lord Hastings’s servant, and to bid him acquaint his master, that it came from Mr. Valois, who was gone out of town.—The maid returned, and informed her, that she had obeyed her orders ; and at the same time presented her with the following letter from Lady Charlotte ; which, being in perfect unison with the present cheerful tone of her mind, tended not a little to heighten the charms of her animated countenance.

To Miss Seymour.

“HOW happy, Louisa, should I be, if, in loving you, I durst believe I was loving myself ! But you are an artful little sophist ; and, by imposing this fallacy upon me, are sily pilfering away the little remains of that heart, of which you had almost entirely robbed me.—

“ But why do I talk of love !—Envy and jealousy now wholly possess me !—You not only successfully intimate, you excel me at my own weapons ! What mortal could bear to be thus outshone ?....not even your reasonable woman, Louisa ;—how much less a fashionable one ?

" I verily believe the word love will be expunged from the English vocabulary, and pride, vanity, and interest placed in its stead! You know I hate to be pitied ; but how can you withhold your pity, when you behold your poor friend, rivalled at once in genius, love, fortune, and fame ? I do not wish to kill you with surprise ; but whatever is the consequence, I must inform you, that Miss Nelson, the young—the gay—the beautiful—the ALL FOR LOVE ! is married to the old—the gouty—the peevish—the good-for-nothing Lord Westdale. She has wedded wealth and grandeur :—May the taste all the happiness they are calculated to bestow !——Is not this wish, Louisa, like a REASONABLE WOMAN ?

" But I must tell you all in due order. I went to dine to-day at —— . A bustle in the street drew me to the window : I threw up the sash ; but, Heavens ! what was my astonishment, my mortification, when I beheld my quondam lover, Lord Westdale, setting out with his bride, with all the charming apparatus of marriage finery—carriages—liveries—favours ! My heart died within me, and my pangs were increased by the bitter reflection, that all this happiness might have been my own. In the midst of my affliction, however, I have derived some consolation from the prudent suggestions of good aunt Gertrude. She is of opinion, that there is still room for hope, since he has already buried three wives ; and kindly adds, that if I am fortunate enough to be successor to the present incumbent, I shall probably see him out, and remain mistress of the field.

" I shall be with you in a few days, that I may be able to judge of the effects of Bath. I doubt not it has produced a total revolution in your opin-

ions, and fitted you for living in that world where you are so well qualified to shine. May your reformation become every day more complete ; may I see you spend the whole morning at your toilette, the whole evening at cards, the whole night in dancing, and the whole day in sleep.—Nay, not contented with seeing you become exemplary in fashion, and eminent in folly, may I live to hear you transmitting your precepts and improvements to posterity ; and instructing your favourite granddaughter in the manner following :

“ You ask me, my dear child, the name and history of that pretty boy with a bow and quiver, whom you see in the arras ?—You must know, that long, long ago, this roguish archer was a mighty favourite, especially among the little misses. But, in process of time, their wise parents began to discover, that he taught them a thousand mischievous tricks, by means of these very arrows ; which they used to steal from him, and shoot at the poor harmless boys, who were minding not one earthly thing but their books and exercises. To say truth, I believe he had no ill intention ; but being forbid the house, whenever he ventured to revisit his old companions, they were obliged to conceal him with the utmost care. Unluckily, some of them, who had been expressly ordered to dismiss him (and you know good children always do as they are bid) were discovered harbouring him in a secret corner, where they thought no one could see him.—Upon which it was agreed by their papa’s and mamma’s, to bring a great, tall fellow, called Interest, to chase him out of the world.—The poor boy, in terror for his life, fled with the utmost precipitation, till he was met by Poverty,

who took him along with her into her hovel : His innocent prattle used to sweeten her toil, and he assisted her in her labour, in reward for the shelter she afforded him. It is greatly doubted whether he still exists ; and as he has not been seen in the world these many years, if he does live, it must certainly be in some remote corner, with this poor ragged companion."—"Indeed, Grandmamma," says Louisa the third, with tears in her eyes, "I am very sorry for poor little Master Cupid ; and if I knew where to find him, I would feed him with my own victuals, and carry him in my bosom like my doll."—"No, no, my good child," answers grandy, "your doll is a much more harmless toy ; besides, you'll soon grow up, and become a fine lady, and get acquainted with Interest, who, to say truth, since he has been universally received into genteel company, is grown a very handsome and agreeable fellow."

"Now, my dear Louisa, to complete the sum of my pious wishes, may both your instructions and example have their full effect in the world ; and, for the good of others, I pray heaven that your children, and grand-children, and latest posterity, may in all things exactly resemble *yourself*."

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

On coming down to dinner, Miss Seymour found Mrs. Stanhope and her son in the parlour, whom Lady Granville had met in her morning excursion. The moment Lord Hastings entered the room, he inquired after Louisa's health, with marks of the

most tender solicitude.—“How,” demanded Lady Granville, “has Miss Seymour been indisposed?” “Indeed, Madam,” replied Lord Hastings, “tho’ Miss Seymour is always averse to give pain, I am confident she must have suffered by the violence of her fall this morning.” He then proceeded to give his mother an account of it; but was interrupted by Louisa, who, seeing Lady Granville look anxious and uneasy, rose, and taking hold of her hand, “I am quite ashamed,” said she, “that Lord Hastings should make this so serious an affair: I assure you, my dear Madam, I do not feel the slightest uneasiness—I am perfectly well.”—“I confess I am disposed to credit Miss Seymour, Madam,” said Mrs. Stanhope, turning to Lady Granville, “for, in spite of his Lordship’s apprehensions, I really think I never saw her look so well in my life.” A conscious blush overpread the fine features of Louisa, which tended not a little to render all the company of Mrs. Stanhope’s opinion.

After dinner, the subject of the pictures was introduced, and occasioned, in the hearts both of Lord Hastings and Miss Seymour, a variety of the sweetest emotions. The former could not resist the pleasure of talking on it: “I know no art,” said he, “which furnishes the mind with so many pleasing ideas as painting.”—“I should certainly except that of writing, my Lord,” said Mr. Stanhope.—“Writing, indeed,” replied his Lordship, “presents us with an image of the soul, as painting does of the person of our friend: but the former is not always open for our inspection; besides, a letter is liable to a thousand accidents, and may never reach the person for whom it is designed;—a picture accompanies us at all times, and in all places;—a let-

ver does not always accord with our sentiments,—we can make a picture speak the very language of our wishes.”—“ I have heard so many encomiums bestowed on those of Miss Seymour and your Lordship,” said Mr. Stanhope, “ that I confess I am become very desirous of seeing them.”—“ You must apply to me for that favour,” said Lady Granville, “ for I value them too highly ever to trust them out of my possession.”—She gave him the pictures : On looking at Miss Seymour’s, “ Your Ladyship surely cannot be so unconscionable,” said he, “ as to keep possession both of this copy and the charming original ?”—“ Indeed, Mr. Stanhope,” she replied, “ I shall find very great difficulty in parting with either ; but, as a time will probably arrive when I must resign my right in Miss Seymour, I am resolved at least to retain her image in my possession.”—“ That image, Madam,” rejoined he, “ is so dear to her friends, that I am persuaded you will not refuse them a share in your pleasure, by permitting them to have copies taken of this admirable picture.—You know Miss Seymour,” continued he, addressing himself to Louisa, “ it is long since you allowed my claim to the title of friend : I flatter myself you will not be so unkind as to dispute it on this occasion.”—“ Indeed, Sir,” answered she, with unaffected sweetness and modesty, “ my friends and I think very differently, I believe, on this subject ; and, to prevent any dispute about the matter, I must beg Lady Granville, from whose partiality to the original the picture derives its chief merit, to take it again into her possession :” so saying, she returned the picture to Lady Granville, with a look and manner which convinced her, that she wished the subject to be dropped: Lady Granville accordingly put the pictures into her pocket.

Lord Hastings felt all the pleasure of a successful rival on this occasion. To be possessed, even though by stealth, of that picture which Miss Seymour had refused to Mr. Stanhope, gave him a joy so sincere, that it brightened his countenance, and enlivened his conversation during the whole evening.—Mr. Stanhope, on the contrary, appeared absent, thoughtful, and uneasy. The coldness of Louisa's manner to Lord Hastings, on their coming to Bath, had removed from his mind all fear of his being a favoured rival ; but he could not help remarking the mutual complacency they now shewed for each other, and his jealousy and apprehension gave weight to a thousand circumstances, which, to an unconcerned spectator, would have appeared as nothing. He had long sought in vain for an opportunity of speaking to Miss Seymour alone ; and hearing that the day was fixed for her leaving Bath, he resolved to be relieved from the torment of suspense, and to convey to her, by means of a letter, those sentiments which he found it impossible any longer to conceal.

Afraid of this letter being delivered to her before company, he contrived to convey it to her himself, when coming out of the rooms ; yet not so privately as not to be observed by Lord Hastings, whose watchful eyes were continually fixed on Louisa, and who instantly perceived the agitation produced in her mind by this circumstance.

Miss Seymour had indeed begun to suspect, that Mr. Stanhope's sentiments for her were of a nature still more tender than friendship ; and was so sincerely his friend, that she was greatly afflicted at the thought of giving him pain. She therefore resolved, by constantly avoiding any private conver-

sation with him, to shew him the improbability of succeeding in his suit; to prevent his urging it, and, if possible, to save him the mortification of a refusal.

This generous conduct, however, had not the desired effect. The following letter at once confirmed her suspicions, and shewed her the inefficacy of her measures:

To Miss Seymour.

"MADAM,

"WITH judgment and penetration like your's, I cannot suppose that you are ignorant of the sentiments which have long taken possession of my heart. With such constant opportunities of discovering the excellence of your's, how could I remain insensible to your merit?—Conscious, however, of the presumption of cherishing those hopes it inspired, I have long struggled to conceal a passion, which was painful to me, only because I feared it would be displeasing to you. A certain coldness and restraint, but too visible of late in your manner, leaves me no room to doubt either of your knowledge or disapprobation of the most respectful, sincere, and constant, though, I fear, unfortunate, attachment.

"Think not, dear Miss Seymour, that hope has dictated this confession....Ah! no; it is fear....it is apprehension alone, which has forced it from me: It is the dread of losing your esteem, which is impelling me to a measure that may perhaps for ever forfeit it. I hardly know what I write.—Oh! Miss Seymour, pity the distraction of my mind;....say, you forgive my presumption: If possible, allow me

to hope, from time, assiduity, and, above all, the exalted generosity of your heart, that it will one day reply to the sentiments of mine. If you cannot do this, teach me to abandon the only hope which could make life desirable!—Ah! Miss Seymour, rather teach me to forget it, in the enjoyment of that peace, which I possessed before I rashly aspired to a dearer name than that of friend!—Alas! I fear, you never can restore my lost tranquillity; yet do not, I beseech you, by your chilling indifference, add the bitterness of felt contempt to the anguish of disappointment.

“I will not offend you with my complaints—only do not banish me from your sight—do not deprive me of my only consolation, that of justifying to myself the indulgence of a passion I cannot conquer, by daily beholding new proofs of those virtues which first inspired it.”

Louisa's distress, on perusing this letter, was extreme; nor was it lessened on being told next morning, by Lady Granville, that she had just been to wait on Mrs. Stanhope, to request she and her son would accompany them to Castle-Hastings, and spend a few weeks there.—She was perplexed beyond measure, with respect to the conduct she ought to hold; and, with a degree of injustice, of which love often makes us guilty, felt resentment against Mr. Stanhope, on account of the uneasiness she then suffered, from a passion which too well she knew to excuse in herself; and which merited compassion in proportion to its hopelessness; and actually disliked him, on account of that preference for which her reason told her, both esteem and gratitude were due.

Though no occasion of speaking to Miss Seymour in private, occurred before leaving Bath, it was easy for Mr. Stanhope to discover how unwelcome the contents of his letter had been to her : but though, from her studiousness to avoid him, he was convinced of her indifference, and even apprehensive of her dislike, he could not resist the desire he felt to accompany her ; the pleasure of beholding her, and the hope with which he flattered himself that the ardour and constancy of his attachment would at length make a favourable impression, on a mind so generous, and a heart so susceptible, as that of Miss Seymour.

Accordingly the two families set off for the Castle ; and after making several agreeable excursions in their way, arrived there in safety.

The first employment in which Louisa engaged, was that of writing to Adelaide ; accustomed to share with her every thought of her soul, she felt as if guilty of treasonable concealment, till she should discover to that faithful friend, the various sentiments with which her's was agitated.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



INTERESTING
MEMOIRS.

By a Lady.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.



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INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

To Adelaide de St. Crain.

"IT is with inexpressible satisfaction I learn, that the friend of my soul has in some measure regained the tranquillity of her's. This, more than any other circumstance, will contribute to the recovery of your health. Oh! may Heaven perfect it, and spare you for the friend, the guide, the comfortress of your Louisa!

"Trust me, Adelaide, I almost envy you the scope you so feelingly describe, and which, I fear, I have lost for ever! I cannot be so unjust to your tender and generous friendship, as to hide from you the anxieties that prey upon my heart.—Hastings, the son of my benefactress—the noble, generous, accomplished Hastings, has, I fear, made too deep an impression there!

"I will not conceal from you, that I believe I am beloved; but, small is the consolation that thought should afford me! Birth, fortune, every thing forbids my aspiring wishes;—gratitude alone ought for ever to repress them. But my Adelaide will pity me; she knows that all these obstacles seem nothing to love.

4 INTERESTING MEMOIRS.

"In the midst of a thousand tormenting inquietudes, your friendship is a never-failing source of pleasure and consolation. When fatigued with company, or sick of my own reflections, I retire to a sweet apartment in the garden, which is elegantly fitted up, and adorned with one ornament more valuable than all the rest—it is your picture, Adelaide, with which a thousand, thousand tender ideas are connected : This little idol hallows the place in my imagination, and I regard it as the temple of friendship—I look up to it with a mournful attention—I gaze on it till it almost seems animated—I try to make it speak the language of my wishes and your heart !....It is silent ; I unfold your letters, and there find a faithful transcript of both.

"Write to me constantly, my revered friend : Remind me of what I owe to Lady Granville.....to Lord Hastings.....to myself ! Your letters will inspire me with resolution to perform my duty, which is too plainly seen....but, alas ! am unable to follow.

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

--- *To Miss Seymour.* ---

"HELP me to rail, Louisa ! I am out of all patience.—This morning I got up earlier than usual ; I dispatched all my domestications ; and ordered the coach the moment breakfast was over, that I might fly to my beloved friend, and spend the whole day with her. Armed at all points,—ready alike for flirting with Hastings, philosophising with his father, or moralising with you,—I was just in the very act of stepping into the coach, when that of

Mr. Alderman Sagely, and a whole squad of his city sons and daughters, arrived....not for a flying visit of a how-do-ye, as they instantly told me, but for a "kind, neighbourly visit of a week."—Insupportable! Had you seen my countenance at that moment, Louisa, it would have given the lie to my education, which, though confessedly that of a fashionable woman, has not taught me to become a disingenuous one. Principle, however, got the better for once of feeling. It is surely immoral, Louisa, to make a fellow-creature suffer any species of uneasiness that you can prevent.

"I ought to do justice to my own patience and meekness, by attempting a description of this city invasion,—but the thing is impossible!—I really do not think there ever was collected together in one family such a miscellaneous set of disagreeables. I shall find as much difficulty to arrange them on paper, as in my drawing-room.

"The Alderman, though first in course, yet last in command, having no character at all, we shall set aside. His wife aspires to that of a fine lady, which she mistakes for that of an invalid; and talks of nothing but spleen, nerves, vapours, green tea, and assa-foetida. His daughters aspire to be wits, and become maimed registers of low witticisms, dull jests, stale puns, and murdered sense. His son aspires with better reason to be a jockey; and descants, for aught I know, very learnedly, on the betts at Newmarket, the victories of the turf, and the merits of a cheftnut filly, whom he would not exchange for the Trojan horse, of heroic memory, nay, nor for Pegasus himself. But however ill-founded the pretensions of some of the family, in one thing they

all succeed, that of rendering themselves supremely ridiculous.—After tea, I dispatched the young fry on a fishing party : seated the Alderman in my father's study (who was fortunately out of the scrape, being gone to Lord Ashby's,) with "the four last acts of parliament" for his companion ; and was preparing to enjoy all that was left me, the fresh air and the delightful evening, when Madam arrested me with....." La ! Lady Charlotte ! sure your La'ship would not be so rash as to walk in the garden after sunset ? I remember, last May—no, it was June,—no, no, I am right again, it was May,—when Mr. Sagely carried me out to see our neighbour Sir Josiah Olive's improvements, at his sweet little box at Newington Butts....." But as it might not improve your patience, Louisa, to hear a description of the beauties of Newington Butts, and an enumeration of all the evils attending this ill-fated walk, I shall pass them over in silence, as Mrs. Sagely did not do.

"Can you figure a restraint more irksome and intolerable than that of being obliged to wear an air of sadness for half a day, when all the while you feel the strongest propensity to laughter ?—Who can help it, when one sees a woman, with the appearance of health, imagine herself afflicted with every distemper under heaven ? Sure I am, I may now be qualified to prescribe for all of them ; for, not contented with tiring me to death with the history of her complaints, I really believe there is not an alternative, an anodyne, or a cathartic, in the whole materia medica, with whose various qualities, operations, and effects, I have not been made acquainted.—This querulous humour is the very bane of society. What satisfaction, can this poor

wretch possess, whilst groaning under a load of fancied, still worse than real distress?—Yes, heaven is ever just; and has surely compensated for her imaginary evils, by making complaint an exquisite gratification to her.

“ I went yesterday to visit your poor Sally in her new habitation, which is very comfortable. She prayed for blessings on us both, and thanked me with her tears. She says, she is in tolerable health, but seems very weak and low; and wears that look of quiet, uncomplaining sorrow, that makes its way to the heart, without asking leave of the judgment. The distress of those in higher station meets with general sympathy:—but who shall pity the obscurely miserable, especially when they become so by their own misconduct?—Ah, my friend! does this circumstance lessen their claim to compassion?—does it not greatly enhance it?

“ Adieu! Since I cannot hope to get to the Castle for some days, have pity on me, and render them less irksome by your presence. If I can neither promise you pleasure nor instruction from my present associates, I can at least assure you of petulance, pertness, and officious politeness from them, and a most grateful and cordial reception from your

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

“ A NEW cause of perplexity and distress, my Adelaide, engages me at present to write to you. Were I not assured that no state of mind is so irk-

some as that of listless indifference, too often the companion of a convent, I would not so soon make fresh demands on the patience and sympathy of my friend.

"I have long suspected that the attentive kindness of Mr. Stanhope proceeded from a sentiment still more tender than that of friendship. Fear rendered me but too quick-sighted on this occasion. Before leaving Bath, he wrote to me, making a declaration of a passion, which does me honour, but never can be productive of any thing but distress to us both.—I strove to spare him the mortification attending an unsuccessful suit, by shunning every opportunity of seeing him alone; but on meeting me this morning in the garden, I was obliged to hear him on the painful subject. What answer I made to his earnest solicitation, I know not; but being greatly agitated, and dreading to pain a mind of such sensibility and delicacy as his, I fear I have not been sufficiently explicit: I resolve, therefore, to write to Mr. Stanhope, and convince him, that the only way to secure both my peace and his own, is to renounce a pursuit which can never be attended with success.

"His presence here, I plainly discover, gives pain to a heart in whose every uneasiness mine too tenderly sympathises. O, Adelaide! what can I do to soften that pain? I am shocked at my own injustice and inconsistency. I pity in Hastings, what I disapprove of in Stanhope; I condemn in him what I indulge myself; and urge him, on account of its hopelessness, to abandon a passion, whilst I, in opposition to honour, gratitude, nay hope itself, cherish it in my inmost soul. Oh, my

Adelaide ! are all the votaries of love thus unreasonable and inconsistent ?

“ The cheerful and healthful serenity, which I had just begun to recover, is already clouded with care, anxiety, and solicitude. What a mixed and ever-shifting scene is this of human life ! What a variety of vain and restless inquietudes sum up the term of our transient existence here !—Ah ! could I, like you, keep my thoughts fixed on heaven, how trivial would appear all the sorrows of earth !

“ Pity me, advise me ; and never, oh ! never cease to love me, my friend ! my monitress—my counsellor—my best and dearest Adelaide !”

To Mr. Stanhope.

“ Sir,

“ IT is impossible to express the concern and agitation into which your letter and conversation have thrown me. My former ignorance of your sentiments was real, not affected. Would to heaven I could have continued ignorant of them for ever !

“ The real esteem and friendship, I have always professed and felt for you, demands from me, on this occasion, a confidence, which I should not have tho't it incumbent on me to repose in any other man. Be assured, Sir, that I am grateful for the preference you have shewn me ; and wish your happiness so ardently, that I would gladly purchase it at any expense, but that of my own honour, which I

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should certainly forfeit, could I consent to give you my hand, when my heart is in the possession of another.

"Let this singular proof of my esteem, and reliance on your honour, at once confirm your friendship, and convince you of the impossibility of any other connection ever subsisting between us. It is with this view alone I have prevailed with myself to discover to you a secret, which I know will forever remain concealed within your friendly bosom.

"If you have courage to conquer a passion, whose strength and delicacy will suggest to your ingenuous mind new motives for attempting it; if you can behave to me with the same ease and freedom, which formerly made us both happy, and bury all that has passed on this subject in oblivion: in short, if you can cease to be my lover, you shall always find a sincere, faithful, and affectionate friend in

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Adelaide de St. Croix.

"AT length the die is cast, and my misfortunes are without remedy. Lady Granville, my dear second mother, from a motive which I am at no loss to divine, and the generosity of which claims my utmost gratitude, has communicated to me, in the strictest confidence, a plan of Lord Granville's, which has long been a favourite one,—that of uniting the families of Winchester and Granville, by a marriage between Lord Hastings and Lady Charlotte.

“ My heart is so sick, and my thoughts in such confusion, that I cannot pretend at present to give you the particulars of this conversation. I do not even know whether Lord Hastings is acquainted with his father’s designs—whether he approves of them. Ah, my Adelaide ! can he indeed approve of them ? But let me no longer deceive myself with fallacious hopes ; too long have they deceived me. In what a delirium have my senses been lost ! It is time to return to reason and duty. Oh, my friend ! I dare not promise that I will cease to love Lord Hastings ; but surely I must, I ought to make the attempt. Happy Lady Charlotte ! what wonder that your spirits are unbroken ? A little time will banish Louisa from the thoughts of your destined husband, and he will return to you and his duty.—What then will become of your wretched friend, Adelaide ? Though the difference of our religion forbids my assuming the veil, there is no difference in our sentiments : our hearts have long been united, and misfortune will rivet the ties of friendship !—I will come to you, my Adelaide ! I will repose my sorrows in your bosom. Your tender sympathy will pour consolation into mine. You will teach me to live contented, to die resigned, and with your’s shall my dust be mingled !”

To the same.

“ I AM certainly right, my friend. Through the thin disguises of a heart that abhors deceit, and is unaccustomed to practise it, Lady Granville, the humane Lady Granville, has discovered my sentiments, and took the step I mentioned in my last to prevent the fatal effects of their indulgence. A

thousand little circumstances have occurred lately to persuade me that it must be so ; and that, although her gentle heart pities my weakness, her duty and interest combine with her reason to condemn it. Of this truth, the following incident will serve to convince you.

“ One day, when walking with my benefactress in the garden, the conversation happened to turn on poetry.—You know Lady Granville had the misfortune to lose, in early life, a daughter, who, though no more than six years, was every thing her fond parents could desire. Among her other excellencies, she shewed a remarkable genius for poetry, which her indulgent mother encouraged, as it was a source of much amusement to her during the frequent confinement occasioned by a delicate constitution ;—the usual concomitant of exalted genius. Striving to recollect a few stanzas written by her daughter during her last illness : and being unable distinctly to repeat them, she gave me her keys, and told me, I would find them in one of the drawers of her cabinet. The first I opened contained the picture of Lord Hastings. I was instantly seized with such a desire to obtain a copy of it, that I slipped it into my pocket ; and next morning, on pretence of purchasing some things at —, a town about six miles from the Castle, I ordered the horses to be put to the carriage ; and driving directly to my millener’s, asked if she knew whether there was any painter of eminence in the town. She directed me to one who was said to have some merit ; I left the carriage and walked to his house.—After giving him many charges to keep the picture concealed, and finish the copy without delay, I paid for it ; and desired it to be sealed up, and sent to .

the milliner's, who promised to have it conveyed in safety to me. There is something inexpressibly painful to an honest and ingenuous mind, in the little arts and subterfuges necessary in the management of all clandestine affairs. The mean evasions to which they lead, wound our delicacy, and do violence to all our feelings. In vain, my friend, would we chicanery with conscience on these occasions. Her decisions are clear, and this is her language : " In whatever words you express your meaning, if they convey not to others that sense in which you understand them yourself, you are a deceiver, and speak not the truth from your heart."

" I was questioned on my return by my unsuspecting friend, about the business on which I had gone ; and having neglected to purchase any thing at the milliner's, felt myself confused and embarrassed by her question, in such a degree, as obliged me to shift the discourse ; and, by my awkward manner of doing so, probably called Lady Granville's attention to a circumstance, which would have otherwise passed unheeded.

" A few days after I had restored the picture to its place, which, in order to obtain Lady Granville's keys, again forced me to have recourse to an artifice I detested, we received a visit from a lady in the neighbourhood ; one of those good sort of gossiping people, who think it incumbent on them to talk, whatever be the subject.—" I hear, Madam," said she, " Lord Hastings is just going abroad ; and sincerely congratulate your Ladyship on having obtained so fine a picture of your son, which will certainly be mighty agreeable to you when he is at a distance."—" I do think myself fortunate on that

account," answered Lady Granville; "but pray, Madam, may I ask, how came you to know of this circumstance?"—"O," replied Mrs. Rawlinson, with a shrug and a significant look, "I saw it last week; but I suspect there is a secret in the case, and that it is intended for a mistress rather than a mother."—"How so, Madam?" demanded Lady Granville. "Why, because, on my opening the drawer which contains the unfinished pictures, to see what additions were making to his collection, Mr. — entered the room, and seemed in great vexation, on perceiving me hold your son's in my hand; telling me, that nobody was permitted to examine any of the pictures, except such as were placed in the glazed box, for the inspection of the public. But trust me, Madam, if you wish this affair to be concealed, I will be the very last person in the world to divulge it. Nobody detests the idea of betraying a secret more than I do."—"Indeed, Madam," replied Lady Granville, gravely, and fixing her penetrating eyes on my face (the first time I ever thought them unpleasing) "if there be any secret in the case, I am intirely ignorant of it."

"The perturbation I suffered during this discourse, is not to be described. Unable to support the presence of Lady Granville, I rose and left the room. I saw, with anguish, that she entertained suspicions, which every attempt to remove would only serve to corroborate, and involve me in fresh perplexity and distress. I resolved, therefore, to take no notice of what had passed, and rather to hazard the displeasure of Lady Granville, than deviate from the straight path of sincerity.

"The day following, she sent for me into her dressing-room.—I entered it with the horror of a self-condemned criminal.—Oh, Adelaide! what must be the anguish of guilty remorse, when an error like mine could awaken such painful consciousness?—Lady Granville took hold of my hand, and, with a look of earnest solicitude and compassion, "My dear child," said she, "your's is a noble soul—I am going to give you a proof that I know how to admire, how to value your merit—Would it were mine to reward it!" She then communicated to me the earnest wishes of Lord Granville to accomplish an union between his son and Lady Charlotte; enumerated the various circumstances that combined to make this union proper and desirable for both families; and concluded with saying, "To you, my Louisa, I confide the important trust of my son's honour and happiness: Strive, my generous Louisa, during his absence, to impress Lady Charlotte with a favourable opinion of his character; as I shall, to give him a just idea of her's."

"Ah, Adelaide! is not this too much to demand from me?—Is it not enough to be forced to abandon hope?....must I be driven to absolute despair?—Yes, Hastings! I will strive, in obedience to rigid duty, to banish thee from my heart; but never will I be so disingenuous as to recommend thee to that of a rival.

"Stanhope continues to solicit my friendship—my pity—since he can no longer hope to convert it into a more tender sentiment. Heaven knows, I both pity and esteem, but never, never can love him.

“Lord Hastings sets out in a few days for the continent ; he will be the bearer of a letter to my friend. I long anxiously that you should see and converse with him ;—perhaps you will then be disposed to excuse, as well as pity, the weakness of your afflicted

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Miss Seymour.

“AH ! Louisa, is it necessary that I should see—that I should converse with Lord Hastings, in order to pity and excuse what you term your weakness ? Alas ! I need but to recollect my own. But shall I indeed bestow that name on the sweetest, most ennobling affection of the soul ?—Oh ! Grammont, was it weakness to love thee ? Is it criminal to deplore thee ?—My offence then will end but with my life !—The walls of a convent may conceal our sorrows from the world, but it will not banish them from our thoughts ; its solitude and silence are but too favourable to their indulgence.

“This day, my Louisa,—this memorable day—was the last of my earthly happiness !—It was that on which Grammont informed me of his success, and added to all my pleasing hopes, that of his speedy return.—Alas ! how soon were they blasted for ever !

“Yet think not, Louisa, that I always indulge these melancholy reflections.—No ; I do not, in bewailing the loss of my dearest blessing, ungratefully overlook those which still remain. I even at times look back on past pleasures with more real

satisfaction than half the world experience in the enjoyment of those that are present. There is a conscious dignity as well as tenderness in virtuous sorrow ;—and far rather would I recal to mind the virtues of Grammont, and weep for his loss, than have lived to witness either the frailties or faults of a character so loved and revered : and who can hope, in this mortal state, to be intirely exempted from either ?—Though he shall never return to me, I shall soon go to him ; and then what will all the sorrows, sufferings, and vexing inquietudes of this life appear, but as the confused shadows of a troubled dream, from which we awake to real and substantial felicity !

“ Let reflections like these carry peace and consolation to the gentle bosom of my friend ; and let us not dwell on evils that are past, and which never would have been present, had not some important purpose rendered them necessary.

“ Do not regret interesting me in your sorrows, Louisa. A dead calm is the worst state of the human mind. Some agitation is necessary to maintain its proper temperament ; and it is best when this is the effect, rather of the social than the selfish principle. The one is like the breath of heaven on the peaceful lake, whose gentle motion purifies and clears ;—the other resembles a vortex in a troubled pool, which absorbs every thing of worth, and sends its feculencies to the surface.

“ You tell me, that “ tears of mingled admiration and gratitude interrupt your perusal of my letters.” How soothing, how flattering is such praise !

How preferable to the applause of a giddy and capricious world? The applause of that world is too often obtained by the mere display of those talents, in the possession of which there can be no merit; it lies solely, my friend, in the just application of them.

“Adieu, my Louisa—I pity, I sympathise in your sorrows; would I could relieve them!—You have my prayers, my wishes, my constant, tender affection. O! may no restless passion long disturb the tranquillity of that bosom, which heaven has formed to be the residence of every amiable and gentle virtue!—Adieu.”

The modest and engaging manners of Mr. Stanhope conciliated the esteem of all with whom he conversed. Even Lord Hastings, though he regarded him in the light of a rival, with that greatness of mind which suppresses the malevolent, and conquers the selfish passions, joined on all occasions in doing justice to his merit.——With respect to Louisa’s sentiments of this gentleman, he was still in painful suspense. She often spoke of him in high terms; but she spoke of him without any marks of that hesitating caution, which betrays that tenderness it is meant to conceal. She professed herself his friend with such unaffected ease, that Lord Hastings flattered himself she would never become his wife.

In spite of every attempt to conceal the distress and perturbation of her mind, the dejection of Louisa became every day more apparent. It did not escape Lord Hastings; who, ignorant of the real cause, and judging of her’s by his own feelings,

sometimes ventured to hope, that regret for his approaching departure had a share in her uneasiness. The singular ingenuity and nobleness of her conduct to Mr. Stanhope, did not tend to lessen a passion, which was inspired by her merit, and whose chief object was her happiness. But the confidence she had reposed in him, added such gratitude and tenderness to his other sentiments, that she often felt real pleasure in his conversation.

Matters were in this train, when Lady Charlotte joined the agreeable party at Castle Hastings.—The frequent visits she made there, had furnished her with opportunities of becoming pretty well acquainted with the sentiments of all parties. Her charming spirits were a cordial, of which they stood in great need.—She plainly perceived the passion of Lord Hastings for Miss Seymour; and though she had once hoped to have become the object of it herself, she was too generous now to harbour such a wish, since she was convinced, that any preference for her, on the part of Lord Hastings, would be destructive of the peace of her amiable young friend. She remarked the uncommon dejection of Louisa, which she attributed solely to the prospect of being divided from the object of her secret attachment; being intirely ignorant of Lord Granville's views, and the conversation that had passed on that subject between Lady Granville and Miss Seymour. She possessed too much goodness of heart, as well as delicacy, to rally her friend on so tender a point; and generously strove to divert her thoughts from it, by such lively sallies and amusing conversations, as she supposed most likely to produce that effect.

On coming into the parlour one morning, where Louisa sat at work, whilst the two gentlemen amused themselves with making some chemical experiments—"Well," demanded she, "how have you three been employed these four hours?—Not so usefully as I, I dare swear."—"We have been most agreeably employed, Madam," answered Mr. Stanhope, "in hearing Miss Seymour perform on the harpsicord; and usefully too, I flatter myself, in giving her some lessons of natural philosophy in return."—"Ah," replied Lady Charlotte, slyly, "you will perhaps find, that the useful and agreeable is not always the expedient.—Your scholar will soon excel her masters, and, with all her simplicity, teach them some arts they little think of."—"I'm sure, Lady Charlotte," said Lord Hastings, "you generally contrive to unite all the three: but pray, in return to your query, how has your Ladyship spent this morning?"—"I have spent this morning," replied she, in a formal and serious tone, "in fabricating a catechism for Louisa."—"For me! Lady Charlotte?" interrupted Louisa, smiling.—"Have you then so bad an opinion of my principles, as to think I am still ignorant of my catechism?"—"I know not what your principles may be," returned she, "but your practice is intolerable: all my good instructions go for nothing.—Bath itself has been thrown away upon you; and you continue obstinately attached to prejudices and opinions that will for ever prevent you from making a figure in the world."—"For pity's sake," said Miss Seymour, "do not abandon me in such deplorable circumstances! Perhaps my reformation is not quite so hopeless as you suppose."—"There is only one chance remains for you," rejoined Lady Charlotte; "My father returns to town about

Christmas; if you will consent to accompany us, the air of London may yet do much."—Louisa shook her head, but made no reply.

The possibility of Miss Seymour's spending the winter in London, where her beauty could not fail to attract a crowd of admirers, had never once entered the thoughts of Lord Hastings. It now shot like lightning through his soul, and tortured his imagination with a thousand apprehensions, to which he had hitherto been a stranger.

Without perceiving his uneasiness, Lady Charlotte thus proceeded :—"Don't you think, my Lord, there is some little chance, that a trip to London might still make away with these strange, antiquated notions of Miss Seymour's?"—"Perhaps, Madam," answered he gravely, "London might alter many of Miss Seymour's present opinions; but I doubt much whether those she would receive there in return, would prove either agreeable or advantageous. There is more hazard, Lady Charlotte, than you are aware of, in the manners of the great world. Too often, in clearing away the rust, it robs the precious metal of its intrinsic worth, and mixes with it the basest alloy."—"I see, Louisa," said Lady Charlotte, "I shall receive very little aid from Lord Hastings: I am therefore resolved to instruct you properly in your duty myself.—Nay, don't look so serious; I won't tire you with a 'tedious homily.' The whole duty of woman is comprehended in much fewer pages than 'the whole duty of man.' We know ours intuitively; they have much to learn, and somewhat to unlearn too, Louisa.—Come, be attentive."

She then took out her pocket-book, and holding it up, composed her features into a look of arch gravity, whilst she thus proceeded ;—" *Question.* For what end did you come into the world ? *Answer.* To get a husband.—*Q.* What is the way to get a husband ? *A.* To dress, dance, chat, play, and go to all manner of public places, except church, for fear of being called a fanatic.—*Q.* What is the duty of a husband ? *A.* To please his wife.—*Q.* What is the duty of a wife ? *A.* To please herself.—*Q.* Are there no more duties incumbent on you as a fine lady ? *A.* Yes ; I must be deaf, dumb, and blind, as occasions require : deaf to the voice of duns, and all such poor relations as most easily beset me ; dumb when my husband remonstrates, and blind to the whole race of city-acquaintances, or country-cousins.—*Q.* Are you not to have some regard to a future state ? *A.* Yes ; after having maintained a good reputation as long as I can, I am to exchange it for a separate maintenance, unless I wish to marry my gallant ; and then I must accuse my husband, obtain a divorce, and bidding a long farewell to this cold climate, court the mild breezes, and taste the lasting pleasures of the continent."

Lady Charlotte arose, and taking hold of Louisa's hand—" Now, my good child," said she, " let us go and con over this first lesson in the garden together ; and when I see it has made a due impression, I will then instruct you in the hundred and fifty articles of a fine lady's religion."

Whilst they were walking in the garden, a servant from the Marquis informed Lady Charlotte of the arrival of some company, that made it neces-

fary for her to return home immediately. Miss Seymour never parted from Lady Charlotte without regret till now. But the gaiety of her spirits was at present so discordant with the pensive tone of Louisa's mind, that she longed to be left at liberty to indulge her melancholy reflections without interruption.—She daily discovered, however, new charms in the character of Lady Charlotte; and having once been somewhat prejudiced against her, on account of her supposed insensibility, she was now disposed to make atonement for her injustice, by giving her credit for perfections to which in reality she had no claim.

That evening, the weather being extremely hot, Louisa left the company, which were numerous, and retired into the garden for the benefit of fresh air.—The door of the pavilion being open, she entered; and throwing herself down on a sofa, began to revolve in her mind all the circumstances of the last affecting interview she had there, with Lady Granville and Lord Hastings.

Mr. Stanhope, whose eyes were attentive to every movement of her's, having observed her change colour, and presently after leave the room, felt the most restless uneasiness on her account. Happening to cast his eyes towards the window which overlooked the garden, he saw her enter the pavilion, and felt a sudden, irresistible inclination to follow her.—He did so: on approaching her, she started from her reverie, and looked dissatisfied on account of its being interrupted. "Pardon this intrusion, Miss Seymour," said he, with emotion; "I would not for the world offend you; but seeing you quit the drawing-room, and fearing, from your

paleness, that some sudden indisposition was the cause, I could not be easy till I knew you was so."

—"I am indebted to you, Sir," answered she, with a deep sigh; "for taking such a share in my uneasiness; it will soon be removed."—"Ah, Miss Seymour!" continued he, "would it were in my power to remove it! but I greatly fear I only add to your distress. Permit me, amiable Louisa, to inquire, whether it is my presence, the presence of an unhappy, or the absence of a more fortunate lover, that occasions your constant dejection? Be assured, if I am the wretched cause of your distress, I will tear myself from you, and every thought connected with happiness.—Your peace is dearer to me than life, which I would cheerfully sacrifice to promote it."

The softened heart of Louisa was unequal to this trial. Repeated sighs burst from her agitated bosom; her tears flowed in abundance; and she did not even attempt to interrupt Mr. Stanhope.—"If I am lost to happiness myself," continued he, "tell me, dearest Miss Seymour," (taking hold of her hand), "is there any way left by which I can promote your's? Fortune, perhaps, opposes your wishes: some favoured rival!—A Rochelle, perhaps? I well remember his uncommon agitation, on seeing you attend Adelaide's admission."—"Oh! ask me nothing more," interrupted Louisa, hastily withdrawing her hand, and rising from her seat, "you already know too much. But leave me, Sir, I conjure you, and bury all that has passed in your own bosom."

Mr. Stanhope withdrew; and Louisa turning down a path that led into a fine field, continued her

walk, till she reached a bench shaded with a large chestnut tree, on which she sat down, and gave way to the sorrows that oppressed her heart.

A few minutes after Miss Seymour quitted the drawing-room, Lord Hastings, on retiring to the window for air, saw Mr. Stanhope enter the pavilion. He was instantly seized with a fit of jealousy; and supposing that it was the scene of an appointment between them, could not resist the desire, which that envious passion inspired, of at least interrupting their happiness, since he could not prevent their meeting. As he approached the pavilion, his heart throbbed so violently, that he was obliged to stop to recover himself. The windows being all thrown open, and shaded with honeysuckle, gave him an opportunity of witnessing this affecting interview, without being observed.

The tears of Louisa wrung his heart; and, utterly at a loss to guess the cause which excited them, he drew nearer the window, at the very instant Mr. Stanhope pronounced this sentence,—“If I am lost to happiness myself,” &c. In a moment the whole truth seemed to flash on his mind; the frequent changes in Louisa’s manner, her continual melancholy, her rejection of Mr. Stanhope’s addresses, all convinced the unhappy Hastings, that there was a favoured rival in the heart of Miss Seymour, whose absence occasioned her distress, and whom it would be equally vain and dishonourable to endeavour to supplant.

To meet with coldness and indifference from a heart which has inspired us with the most tender sentiments, is afflicting in the highest degree: But

what can equal the anguish of knowing that the heart we ardently covet is actually in possession of another ?

Lord Hastings stood still, till Miss Seymour and Mr. Stanhope were both out of sight ; and then, entering the pavilion, threw himself on the sofa she had just quitted. He reviewed the happy hours he had spent with her during Lady Granville's confinement, when he almost believed he was beloved ; and execrated that rash curiosity, which had for ever robbed him of the sweet delusion.

Louisa, after having recourse to the soothing letters of Adelaide, some of which she always carried in her pocket, and which, by their pious and solemn reflections, never failed to calm the disturbed soul of her friend, being now tolerably composed, ventured to return to the drawing-room.

Unable to bear the restraint of company, and wholly engrossed by his own reflections, Lord Hastings took the same road Miss Seymour had quitted, and wandered down the field.

As he approached the bench, his attention was roused, by seeing a paper lying on the ground. He picked it up ; it was without seal or superscription ; but as he had no doubt of its having been dropt by Miss Seymour, he resolved to restore it unopened. At that instant, recollecting the delight he had experienced on a former occasion, from the perusal of what she had written, and supposing this might contain such another transcript of her heart, he could not deny himself the satisfaction of discovering at this crisis what were its inmost thoughts.

—Perhaps it is safer, on some occasions, to commit a slight offence with one's eyes open, than by seeking for reasons to excuse the commission of it, to endanger our mental sight, and blind our understanding with the mist of false argument.—He opened the letter, which proved to be that from Grammont to Adelaide; which Louisa, in the agitation of her mind, immediately after reading it, had forgotten to restore. He saw that it was not the hand of a female.—What was his amazement, when he read these words!...“At length, most beloved of women, your fond lover, your faithful friend, tastes of real transport, by being able to convey it to you,” &c.

Having finished the letter, a deep sigh burst from his bosom:—“There is then no hope under heaven remaining for me!” cried he, in a tone of desponding sorrow. Then, after a pause, “Yes; that of seeing Louisa happy. Fortune seems to oppose the union of two hearts formed for each other, would I too oppose it? Is not the happiness of Louisa dearer to me than life?—Thank Heaven! though I am wretched myself, it may still be in my power to render her happy; and to restore peace to the bosom of the gentlest, most amiable of human kind.”—Full of these sentiments, so worthy of himself, he sought for an opportunity of conversing with Miss Seymour in private, which she as studiously avoided.

The evening before his departure, observing her walking alone in the garden, he followed her; and, on her entering the pavilion, stopped to reflect in what manner he ought to address her. She appeared lost in thought; a heavy sigh betrayed the deep distress which occasioned it; and after remaining some time in a reverie, which Lord Hastings was

unwilling to interrupt, she arose, and retiring to the opposite window, from whence she could see any person that entered the garden, she drew out of her bosom his picture, which hung from her neck by a small string of pearls. The agitation of Lord Hastings on this occasion was extreme: What would it have been, could he have discovered that it was his own features she was then contemplating!—After looking on it for some time in silence, she kissed, and bathed it with her tears: then, in a low and mournful tone,—“Yes,” said she, “fortune and duty oppose our happiness:—absence may blot my image from thy heart; but no power on earth can rob me of the dear delight of loving thee tenderly,—loving thee only,—loving thee for ever!”

Lord Hastings could support this scene no longer. He came round to the door of the pavilion; at sight of him, Louisa started back with surprise, and in great confusion, hastily returning the picture into her bosom, prepared to retire.—Taking hold of her hand, he led her gently back to the sofa, and seating himself by her,—“O Louisa!” said he, “why do you avoid me? What have I done to incur your hatred!”—“My hatred, my Lord!” said she,—and again was silent.—“Yes, Miss Seymour, it is too plain, you hate, you fly me! I am not conscious of having merited your displeasure, but you cannot be unjust. Ah, Louisa!” continued he, fixing his mournful eyes on her’s, which were streaming with tears, “where are all those happy moments fled that we once enjoyed together, when I cherished for you sentiments that I dared not discover, that I must forever hold sacred; that I once—O forgive me!.....thought you beheld without

contempt. But I deceived myself, and am now punished for my presumption."—Louisa was now forced to have recourse to her salts; he perceived the agony of her mind, and hastened to put an end to the conversation.

"I am no stranger, Miss Seymour," continued he, "to the cause of my misfortune. Permit me, ere I go, to bestow on you the means of happiness, which are now useless in my hands:—Think sometimes on the absent Hastings, who will never cease to think of you; and who, though he cannot be the sharer of your heart, must for ever be the friend of your virtues.—Deign to accept of this trinket; and let it remind you of a man who prefers your felicity to his own."

During this speech, great part of which she could not then comprehend, Louisa was in a state to be conceived,...not described. The trinket with which Lord Hastings presented her, was a locket inclosing his hair, enamelled with the initials of his name, and richly set with brilliants. She received it with a look of acknowledgment; and at length found composure sufficient to add, in a tone of inexpressible tenderness,—“Be assured, my Lord, I have no need of this remembrancer. I shall never forget you; and wherever you go, my prayers and best wishes shall attend you.”—She rose;—“I have only one other request to make, Miss Seymour,” said he; “it is, that you will take charge of this packet till after I am gone; you may then break the seal, and dispose of the contents as directed.”

He retired, leaving Miss Seymour distracted with the variety, as well as violence of her emotions.

She repeated every word he had uttered a thousand times; and every time found herself less able to unravel their meaning. The packet too furnished her with many conjectures; but she resolved to obey his injunctions with the strictest fidelity.

She returned to her apartment with so violent a headache, and in such agitation of spirits, that it was late before she joined the company; but though she wished above all things to avoid a formal parting with Lord Hastings, she dreaded the suspicions she might incur by appearing to shun it.

After a dull and silent supper, she rose to retire. "Miss Seymour," said Lord Granville, "do you remember, Hastings sets out to-morrow, won't you wish him a good journey?"—"I do, with all my heart, my Lord," answered she. Lord Hastings saluted her; and following her to the door, he seized her trembling hand, which he pressed to his bosom—"O, Louisa!" said he, "may heaven's best blessings surround you, and may you be completely happy, whatever become of the ill-fated Hastings."

Louisa retired to bed, but not to sleep. Of all the passions which warred in her bosom, and banished sleep from her eyes, curiosity was the most violent, as well as painful. She arose by day-break; and the moment she heard the carriage of Lord Hastings drive from the door, she broke the seal, with a trembling hand and beating heart. How great was her astonishment when she read these words!—

"THE inclosed letter leaves me no room to doubt of my misfortune, and sufficiently explains to me the cause of your late dejection. If you generously permit me to be the means of removing it, I shall still taste happiness in your's, and learn to put a just value on the goods of fortune. May these, and every blessing be your portion, and that of the deserving partner of your heart! In possessing your's, he will possess the only treasure which in this world could excite the whole hopes, wishes, and desires, of

your devoted,

though most unfortunate,

(HASTINGS.)

The letter, to which Lord Hastings alluded, was that from Grammont to Adelaide. Under the same cover were two bank bills for a thousand pounds each, and a promissory note for three more, to be paid at Lord Granville's death.

It is difficult to say, whether admiration, gratitude, sorrow, or love, at this moment predominated in the agitated soul of Louisa; but though they alternately strove for dominion there, they at last yielded to that melancholy regret; that exquisite sympathy in the affliction of Lord Hastings, which excited the most ardent, though unavailing wishes to relieve it.

The nobleness of her soul, as well as integrity of her heart, left her not a moment in doubt about the conduct she ought to pursue. But sensible that, to her duty and honour she must now sacrifice the

dearest interests of that heart, she feared to trust its suggestions to her pen. Conscious, that his mistaken belief of her preference for another, would prove the most likely means of prevailing with him to banish her from his thoughts; convinced that it was his duty to do so; soothed, perhaps, with the secret hope, that time, by discovering his error, might revive his tenderness, she resolved, agreeably both to her ingenuity and affection, to write and thank him; but neither to mislead nor to deceive him.

To Lord Hastings.

“ My Lord,

“ Your noble, your generous intentions, I accept with all that gratitude and admiration they justly claim. Could they have availed to my happiness, I would not have returned these proofs of a friendship, which it shall be my study and ambition to deserve; but other obstacles oppose my felicity; perhaps will for ever oppose it.

“ In the exercise of those exalted virtues, which form your character, and conciliate universal esteem, may you, my Lord, find that happiness they are calculated to bestow, and which none can better deserve.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

Though it is painful to lie under unmerited censure, there is a pride attending conscious virtue, which makes her disdain to solicit a hearing, in order to vindicate a conduct which she is sensible merits praise.—Miss Seymour either saw, or

thought she saw, an alteration in Lady Granville's manner towards her, ever since the unlucky affair of the picture :. This gave her extreme pain ; but pride and modesty both opposed at that time a confession of her weakness. Unaccustomed to restraint or concealment, it grew every day more painful to her ; and she resolved, as soon as Lord Hastings should leave the Castle, to communicate all that had passed between them to his mother.

On going into Lady Granville's dressing-room, she found her spirits extremely depressed on account of her son's departure. She mingled her tears with her's, and suggested every thing most likely to support her spirits. " If I cannot console your heart, my dear Madam," said she, " for the absence of your son, let me at least prove myself worthy the name of daughter, with which you honour me, by laying open mine to your view.—I am persuaded you are not ignorant of the sentiments he has long entertained for me ; but, however flattering to me, in justice to you and to myself, I wish to convince you, that I have never given encouragement to them."

She then succinctly related all that had passed between her and Lord Hastings at their last interview ; and taking out the packet, and at the same time presenting her with her answer to the letter from Lord Hastings,—“ Read this, Madam,” said she, “ and instruct me, if you wish me to make any alterations in it.”

Lady Granville perused the letters with visible emotion. Then rising and throwing her arms round Louisa's neck, which she bathed with tears of mingled admiration and tenderness,—“ No, my amiable,

my exalted child !" said she, " your uncorrupted heart stands in no need of instruction. You have acted nobly ; and besides the conscious approbation of your own mind, your conduct, so honourable, so disinterested, will, I trust, one day meet its reward."

Lord Hastings wrote to his mother almost every post ; but though he never omitted inquiring after Miss Seymour's health, he carefully avoided mentioning her in any other terms than those dictated by politeness.

As he did not entertain a doubt concerning the object of her tenderness, he was not a little astonished to learn, on his arrival at Paris, that the Count de Rochelle had been married for several months. This at once accounted to him for Louisa's melancholy, and inspired a fond hope, that it yet might be in his power, by a tender, constant, assiduous passion, to remove it. He knew too well the bitter anguish of disappointment, not to feel most exquisite sorrow for Miss Seymour, on account of this supposed misfortune,....of all others, surely the most insupportable,....that of the cruelty and perfidy of a person in whom we have reposed unbounded confidence, and from whom we have expected all our felicity.

Some weeks after Lord Hastings arrived at Paris, Louisa received the following letter from Adelaide, in answer to the introductory one, of which he was the bearer :—

To Miss Seymour.

" I WONDER not, my friend, that you wished me to see and converse with Lord Hastings ; it is

impossible to do either, without pleasure and admiration. He has paid me several visits, each of which has served to confirm my opinion of his noble and generous character.—He spoke but little of my Louisa ; when he did, it was the language of unfeigned praise. He asked a thousand questions about Rochelle ; every one of which betrayed the interest his heart took in the subject ; but instructed by your letter, I purposely avoided it : This he saw, and I doubt not his suspicions were confirmed by it. The Count de Rochelle was married some time ago to Mademoiselle St. Hermione ; and I plainly perceive, is suspected by Lord Hastings of having acted dishonourably by you. I told him I had the highest opinion of Rochelle ; at which he seemed much astonished : But I presently changed the subject, as I wished not to come to an éclaircissement on that head.—He quits Paris to-morrow, and promises to visit me on his return from Italy, where he proposes to spend the winter.

“ I still write to my friend from the Ville de St. Croix, the scene of my earliest, happiest days : But though this scene has proved favourable to my health, I fear, Louisa, it is not so to my peace !

“ It is impossible to describe to you that variety of painfully pleasing emotions I experience, whilst wandering alone amidst these delightful shades..... once the habitation of love, and hope, and joy..... now the asylum of grief, inquietude, and even despondent melancholy ! Not a tree, not a shrub appears around me, that is not hallowed by memory, as having witnessed the tenderness of love, the enthusiasm of friendship, or the fervor of devotion.—However whimsical such a sentiment may appear

to those who are ignorant of the tender affections from which it takes its rise, I confess, that my attachment to these inanimate objects strongly resembles that we retain for those friends who have watched over us in infancy—who have sustained our weakness, absolved our errors, and cherished the seeds of every amiable virtue.

" On entering a little arbour to-day, in a retired part of the wood, to which Grammont knew I often resorted, I beheld the initials of my name, cut on the smooth bark of a beech, by that hand which is now mouldering in the dust.—To you, Louisa, I need not describe the feelings of that moment!—O, Grammont! if they are known to thee...if thou art an invisible witness of my secret, my hopeless, my unceasing sorrows—behold them with pity, and compassionate the weakness thou canst not approve!

" Perhaps, he thought a period might arrive, when, divided from the partner of his heart, these proofs of his constant affection might serve to awaken in her's the remembrance of a passion which neither time nor absence could in the slightest degree impair....How unnecessary such a remembrancer! Shall that day ever awaken me to life and consciousness, that shall not also witness the admiration of thy virtues, the love of thy goodness, the grateful recollection of thy unequalled tenderness, cherished in my afflicted heart?—No, Grammont! best and dearest of men...till that heart, like thine, shall for ever be congealed by the cold hand of death, thy loved image shall never be erased from it!) Meantime, the soothing recollections of the past, shall maintain a sweet, though silent intercourse between us—till that solemn, welcome

hour arrive, when the veil that now divides us shall be rent, the burthen of mortality shaken off, and we shall meet, first and only object of my vows, in perfect, secure, and immortal felicity !

“ It is this prospect, my Louisa, that becalms the griefs, and supports the soul of your friend. Much, much does she need every support.

“ I return to St. Cire to-morrow, on account of Constance, who is very ill, and begs to see me : Secure in the sympathy of a friend, whose misfortunes have qualified her to feel, and whose weakness to absolve the frailty of others, she seeks to repose her sorrows in my bosom. Like a tender flower, blighted by an untimely frost, she is drooping apace—nor will ever feel the reviving influence of another spring !——Adieu, dearest Louisa ! adieu.

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX.”

To Lord Hastings.

“ BY this time my dear Henry will have reached Paris, and mingled with the promiscuous crowd that forms the society of that large and licentious metropolis.

“ Amidst a people learned in the arts of seduction, and ardent in the pursuit of pleasure, how much will it behove you to maintain that manly firmness of character, for which I have so often applauded you.—I apprehend no danger to you from the grossly vicious, or openly profane : such inspire a mind like your’s with horror and disgust. But I

confess, my son, I am not without fear, from the insidious arts of the reasoning, sceptic, and systematic libertine. The ridicule thrown on every thing serious, by the polite circles of our sex, is severely mortifying to the delicate sensibility of youth, and highly discouraging to virtuous conduct. And the cruel refinements of a mistaken philosophy have, of late years, given double weight to opinions, over which, passion and appetite had ever too powerful an influence. The sole preservative of popular morality is religion. Whenever the vulgar are taught to scorn her restraints, they soon despise those of virtue. Vice rushes in, like an impetuous torrent, which has overwhelmed its bounds, and carried all before it. The disinclined multitude are unable to perceive the nice discriminations between real and apparent interest. Religion held forth a faithful glass, to aid their imperfect sense: infidelity dashes this to the earth, and in its stead, presents the rabble with a deceptive mirror, which magnifies contiguous objects, and shews them in alluring colors; whilst it imbibes the rays which would delineate the back ground.

“ You know I have always been of opinion, that piety is the only sure foundation of moral conduct. — What ingenious motive can affect that mind, which is regardless of its obligations to Infinite Beneficence? — Sophists may argue and refine as they will, but there can be no genuine virtue independent of true piety.

“ We daily see proofs of the inefficacy of speculative opinions, to regulate the actions of men. The understanding often assents to truths which never reach the heart. A feeling and habitual sense of Duty — a love of those divine precepts — a belief of

those sublime desires—a hope of those eternal rewards he hath revealed; will be found absolutely necessary to counterbalance the suddenness of temptation, the force of example, and the constant solicitations to criminal indulgence.

“One consideration will have much weight with a mind possessed of sensibility like yours: the influence of your example may extend much farther than you are aware of. To a generous soul, how ennobling, how elevating is the thought, that by a truly amiable and virtuous conduct, we may induce the wicked and unhappy to quit the paths of vice and destruction, and pursue those that are pleasantness and peace; not only in their termination, but in their tenor also.—A corrupt society is to the world; what a corrupt member is to a society. The whole seems in a great measure dependent, even on its smallest parts. What solid value should this idea give us in our own estimation; and how cautious ought we to be, lest our errors prove inductive of evil, where our goodness may never reach:

“Should you continue, my dear Henry, to persevere in the practice of virtue and goodness, my utmost ambition in this world will be gratified; and the heart of a father, to whom you are unspeakably dear, will triumph in the conscious pride and joy of paternal affection.

“GRANVILLE.”

Though the obstacles to her happiness still remained, Louisa tasted the sweetest satisfaction, in the consciousness of being beloved. The perfect ease with which Lady Charlotte talked of Lord

Hastings on all occasions, convinced her that he had made no very tender impression on her heart. In cherishing the secret sentiments of her own, she was sensible she did no injustice to her friend ; and though honour and gratitude determined her never to deviate from the line of conduct she had hitherto so nobly pursued, a sweet hope would often steal into her bosom, that a time might come when her duty and happiness would no longer be incompatible with each other.

In the conversation of her revered friend, Lady Granville, and the peaceful and rational pleasures of the country, for which she had an exquisite relish, Louisa once more began to taste that sweet and equal serenity, which seemed better suited to her temper, than more animated, but often less sincere pleasures.

This calm, however, was suddenly and violently interrupted, by a very melancholy and unexpected event ; of which the following letter from Lady Charlotte, conveyed the account :

To Miss Seymour.

“ I AM so greatly agitated at present, my dear Louisa, with the affecting scene I have just witnessed, and which your weak spirits could never have supported, that I am very unequal to the task of writing.

“ Alas ! our poor, afflicted Sally is no more !—I received a note this morning from nurse, begging to see me immediately : I set out for her cottage

without a moment's delay. On my arrival, the worthy creature met me at the door, and, with eyes swimming in tears, told me that poor Sally was delivered last night of a fine girl, who was stout and healthy, but she feared the mother was in great danger.

"Though she bore her sufferings with much patience and resolution, the moment she heard the child cry, she burst into a violent flood of tears, which greatly agitated her weak frame. She asked to see it as soon as it was dressed; on its being brought, she took it in her arms, gazed on it, kissed and bathed it with her tears; then taking a little locket from her own neck, containing its father's hair, she tied it round that of the infant, saying, "Unfortunate innocent!—Alas! this, and the name of Sally, is all I have to bequeath thee!—Thou must not presume to claim that of thy unkind father!"

"This exertion was too much for her feeble body and exhausted spirits: she was seized with faintings, which threatened to put an instant period to her life. The physician ordered her to be kept perfectly quiet, and begged nurse to have the child removed as soon as possible, as the sound of its voice always threw her into agonies. She had sometimes dropped asleep through the night, but constantly waked starting, with some exclamation of terror; she complained of violent sickness and palpitation at her heart, and had been delirious for several hours.

"On hearing her talking to herself in a low voice, I slipped softly to the bed-side: Her eyes were shut, but I heard her distinctly pronounce the

following sentences : " Cruel deceiver !—faithless Talbot ! why did you leave me ?—Did I not give you my whole heart ?—I never did any thing to offend you, but loving you too fondly. If Heaven forgives my offences, oh, Talbot ! you might have pardoned this !—Shall these eyes never again behold thee ?—Unkind Talbot ! wilt thou never, never, never return ? But I shall soon be at peace." —Then hearing her infant cry—" Pitying God !" she exclaimed, " defend this helpless, desolate babe ! It is guiltless of its mother's crime !—Oh, Talbot ! hadst thou heard this voice, unkind as thou art, thou couldst not have left me !—Yet, do not return ; it would grieve thee to see my grave—I would die rather than grieve thee !—I shall soon go to Heaven—Ah, Talbot ! could I but hope to meet thee there !"

" She fell into a slumber for a few minutes. I sat down by her bed-side.—Oh, my Louisa ! who could behold unmoved such a scene of woe ?

" Again starting up, and hastily drawing back the curtain, she exclaimed, looking wildly round her, " Where, oh ! where is he ?—Did I not see him here ?—Gone again ! Gone for ever !"—Then sinking down on her pillow, pale and exhausted, she slowly repeated, in a solemn tone,—“ Trouble and anguish are come upon me !—my purposes are broken off, even the thoughts of my heart !—As for my hope, who shall see it ?”—Here she paused, as if to recover breath ; and then proceeded : " My kinsfolk have failed, and my familiar friends have forgotten me : They whom I loved are turned against me !—Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends ; for the hand of God

hath touched me !—There is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease : but man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ? He lieth down, and riseth not, till the heavens be no more !”——After again pausing a few minutes, she clasped her hands together, and raising her dim eyes to heaven, prayed, in a low and feeble voice, interrupted with sighs : “ Impute not, gracious God ! who knoweth our frame—O, impute not guilt !—Pity the errors of youth, not perverseness.—Father of the afflicted ! protect my child—save from ruin him I loved—Receive, oh ! receive thy humble penitent to the arms of thy everlasting mercy !”——Here her faintings succeeded each other so rapidly, that nature, unable longer to support so unequal a struggle, sunk altogether ; and in a few minutes she expired in my arms.

“ Just heaven ! wilt thou not avenge the cause of innocence like her’s ?”

“ O, my Louisa ! come to me, and let us mingle our tears together ! Tears of exquisite sorrow, and virtuous indignation, over the breathless corpse of her who has fallen a victim to perfidious cruelty, and who has neither kindred nor friends to bewail her !

“ Yesterday, when she felt her labour approaching, she sat down and wrote the inclosed to you ; and having sealed it, delivered it to nurse, desiring her to keep it in a safe place, till she should get well

“ Again let me intreat you to come to me immediately, that we may concert together proper

measures, both for the private interment of the mother, and removal of the child. Ill-fated innocent! I almost regret its having survived her!

Your

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Miss Seymour.

"FORGIVE, dear and honoured Madam, forgive the boldness of your unhappy Sally, who presumes once more to address you—it will be the last time.

"My hour of trial fast approaches; and, in spite of all your goodness and compassion to me, I am persuaded, it will put a period to my short and unfortunate life.—My heart is broken with unkindness. All are humane and compassionate to me; but that one from whom I deserve the most, will shew me no pity!

"My dear Miss Seymour, though you are all goodness, I know you dare not come to me. I have none to comfort and encourage me, at the time I shall most need comfort: even a living child, that gives joy to the heart of a mother, will only increase the bitter anguish of mine!—No father waits to receive my helpless babe, and bless her who bore it!—If I live, I have no example to propose for its imitation;—if I die, I have no portion to bequeath it but poverty—no inheritance but shame!

"Though I have forgotten your lessons of virtue, O, my dear, kind mistress! do not abandon my

destitute child, if that merciful Being who beholds the penitence of its mother, permits it to see the light !—Oh ! do not suffer the infant of your once favoured Sally, to become an object of public charity—perhaps, of public scorn : It may then learn to wander from the paths of innocence, like its wretched mother !—Alas ! she had not that excuse for wandering !

“ I can write no more.—Do not accuse any one of my death ; nor reproach any one with unkindness to me. My own credulity has undone me—the fondness of my weak heart betrayed and ruined me !

“ Farewel, my loved, revered mistress !—You must be happy, because you are virtuous.—O ! may heaven’s best blessings ever surround my dear Miss Seymour ; and may that sweet peace be her’s, which will never again in this world visit .

Her unfortunate and afflicted,

But ever grateful

SALLY. VERNON.”

This letter, and the melancholy and unexpected fate of the unfortunate Sally, pierced the soul of Louisa with the most exquisite sorrow. But though her sensibility was extreme, it never unfitted her for the discharge of any active or social duty. By the care of the best of mothers, she had early learned to repress those feelings, whose over-indulgence would have been ruinous to her own peace, and injurious to society, by depriving them of those

good offices which are the offspring of genuine and well-regulated sympathy.

She set out immediately for the Marquis of Winchester's; from whence the two ladies walked to the nurse's house. At the sight of the little infant, Miss Seymour was greatly affected; nor would she be denied the mournful pleasure of beholding for the last time, the associate of her earliest years. On uncovering the corpse, and seeing the pale and emaciated, but placid countenance of her youthful companion, she clasped her hands together in an agony of grief, and turning to Lady Charlotte, who stood by her side in silent sorrow—"Behold, my friend," said she, "the fatal effects of cruel and headstrong passion! Behold the sad remains of youth, beauty, sweetness, innocence! Almighty God! shall the creatures of thy power, the monuments of thy mercy, the daily sharers of thy bounty, for the sake of indulging a criminal impulse, thus inhumanly, thus deliberately destroy each other?—Is it possible, is it really possible," she continued, "that she whom but a few months ago, I beheld so blooming, healthy, and innocent, whose graceful form, endearing modesty, and ineffable sweetness, excited my admiration, is now a pale, breathless, cold, insensible corpse?"—Then stooping down and kissing her lifeless cheek,—"Farewel! farewell for ever!" said she, "dear, unfortunate, but too credulous Sally: may thy virtues live in thy faithful heart, and may thy errors for ever be buried in thy grave."

Having appointed a hired carriage to meet them at the nurse's house, they bid her adieu; and having carefully wrapt up their infant charge, proceeded to Castle Hastings: in the neighbourhood

of which lived a woman, who having just lost a child whom she suckled, was glad to have its place supplied by a foster.

Having dismissed the chaise, Lady Charlotte walked slowly towards the Castle, to avoid observation, whilst Miss Seymour conveyed the little baby in her arms to the cottage.

The aversion she felt for every species of duplicity, joined to her desire of concealing the weakness of Sally for ever from the world, induced her to be very silent on the subject of the child. She told the good woman, however, that though the child had few friends to care for it, she should have every thing provided for it, and be amply rewarded for the proper discharge of her duty.

Though this melancholy affair made a deep and lasting impression on the heart of Louisa, her humane attention to this poor babe served both to sooth her sorrow, and fill up that joyless void which the absence of Lord Hastings occasioned in her mind.——Prudence obliged her to restrict the number of her visits to the cottage; but as it stood at a very small distance from the Castle, she frequently directed her walks that way, without hazard of incurring suspicion.

In one of her solitary rambles, which she had extended to a considerable length, her thoughts being occupied with those tender reflections which wrap the pensive mind in a sweet delirium, recollecting that she was within a few paces of the field in which stood the nurse's cottage, she directed her steps that

way, in order to visit her little charge whom she had not seen for some time.

She was met at the door by the good woman, who expressed the utmost satisfaction on seeing her : —“ I was just agoing, Madam,” said she, “ to fetch little Sally to visit your La’ship to day at the Castle, that you might see what a charming little puppet it grows, and how smart and tidy she looks in the new cap your La’ship gave her.” —“ I am very happy, nurse,” answered Louisa, “ that you are likely to have such credit by your foster ; but you must never bring her to the Castle, as I will often call here to see her, and always take care that you shall want for nothing.”

As she was caressing this beautiful child with much fondness, a sigh escaped her, on recollection of its birth and unfortunate circumstances. —“ I hope, Madam,” said the simple cottager, “ your La’ship does nor see any cause to find fault with my care of the child ? I am sure she sucks all night long, and gets as much victuals as she can eat, and my husband never has a rashter, without giving her a bit of it ; for he loves my little puppet, and our bacon is pure good, an’ please your La’ship, and sucking a bit makes the child hearty.” —“ Indeed, good nurse,” replied Louisa, with a complacent smile, “ I am quite satisfied that you do your duty to the sweet babe ; but I sigh to think what a cruel father she has.” —“ Lack-a-day, Ma’am !” replied nurse, “ there be too many such fathers in the world ; but, mayhap, if your La’ship would send and tell him what a fine child he has here, he might return again.”

Mrs. Seymour, on looking at her watch, perceived that it was very late; she therefore repeated her injunctions to nurse never to bring Sally near the Castle; and bidding her a good-morning, returned home.

She found there the Marquis and his daughter, whose company became dearer to her every day: It was with real concern, therefore, she learned, that business of importance required that the Marquis should immediately set off for London. The two ladies took leave of each other, with sincere expressions of tender regret, on account of this unexpected separation; and with mutual promises of beguiling the length of winter, which was already begun, by a constant epistolary intercourse.

As nothing material to this history occurred during the six following months, I shall insert the letters which passed between the several parties during that period.

To Adelaide de St. Croix

"I AM persuaded, my beloved Adelaide, that it is not from agitation of mind, but vacancy of heart, our forest sufferings arise. Lord Hastings is gone—Lady Charlotte has left me—the gloomy winter is commenced, and corresponds but too well with my present feelings. How painful now do I feel my absence from my best and dearest friend! That friend, who alone, of all the human race, could enter into every sentiment of my soul; and, without the aid of language, comprehend its every motion, soothe its every inquietude, look compassion, sigh relief, and smile approbation.

" Whilst the presence of Lord Hastings kept my mind in continual fear and agitation, though my spirits were sometimes depressed, they were never so perfectly overwhelmed as since these fears have lost their object,

" My present dejection, which I struggle in vain to conceal, has not escaped the observation of the humane Lady Granville. She is apprehensive on account of my health, though too delicate to express these apprehensions; and, under pretence of improving her own, has proposed that we shall spend Christmas with Lord Salisbury, and make a round of visits before returning to the Castle.—I am grateful for her kind intentions, but fear I shall not profit by them!—My mind of late seems sunk into a kind of lethargic insensibility, from which no exertion, however vigorous, can rouse it. Though innumerable sources of enjoyment are in my possession, I can enjoy nothing: The very aspect of nature is changed to me; the sun has lost its cheerfulness, and the fresh air no longer revives me.—Surrounded with friends, kind and attentive, I seem at times to myself the most desolate being on the face of the earth. The dissingenuity and ingratitude of this rebellious spirit, adds remorse to the weight of my affliction!—What can I do, my Adelaide?—O! pity, console, and, if possible, reconcile me to myself!

" I am just returned from church, where I have regained that heavenly calm, and felt that sweet elevation of soul which we experience, whilst, with fixedness of thought, we contemplate the sublime of existence, and rejoice in the perfection of benevolence!—An employment, how noble, how de-

lightful, how suitable to a rational, immortal, accountable being !

“ There is no situation, my Adelaide, in which the sorrowful and dejected heart may not derive consolation from the exercise of ardent, unfeigned piety. But ah ! to descend from these exalted heights—to feel the tide of frailty and passion return again—to sink again into dejecting melancholy—to be again overwhelmed with suspense, fear, and inquietude : this, oh this, my Adelaide, is painful, is distracting to the soul of your

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Lord Hastings.

“ IT is now, my dear Henry, that, laying aside that standard by which you judged of mankind, and which you found in your own uncorrupted heart, you begin to open your eyes, and to see them as they really are, instead of what you wished them to be. It is with pain we first make this discovery ; for the errors of the judgment are always more mortifying to our self-love, than those of the heart. On entering the world, the delicacy of our taste, as well as the soundness of our principles, receive so rude a shock, that, for a while, we become absolute misanthropes. Time, however, and a more intimate acquaintance with ourselves, change our sentiments, and correct the severity of our strictures on others.

“ In reality, mankind are more deserving of pity than contempt. Want of reflection, not malevo-

lence of intention, is their ruin. And when one considers how difficult it is, especially in early life, to resist the allurements of pleasure, and combat the pleas of indolence, it seems rather surprising, that they are not always the slaves of vice, than that they should sometimes become the dupes of folly.

“ I would not have you enter the world with an unkind and indiscriminating jealousy of your species. But as I know, in youth, the heart generally decides before the understanding, and the imagination often leads them both astray, I would have you cautious in forming opinions of characters, and modest in delivering your own ; and whilst you behave with affability to all, reserve your confidence for those, of whom long acquaintance hath discovered the sterling merit.

“ One’s heart swells with honest indignation, to see the great, the venerable, the respectable virtues, passing unheeded through the vale of obscurity, whilst the mean, selfish, servile arts of cunning and hypocrisy, engage public notice, and even advance the possessor to shining and elevated stations. Let us, my son, despising the vile craft of the sycophant, whilst we remain obstinate in virtue, cultivate that universal complacency and good-will, which is the offspring of good sense, principle, and humanity.

“ You tell me, “ you are shocked to find every thing serious treated with contempt and ridicule, by those who arrogate to themselves the name of fine gentlemen ; though neither their talents nor manners seem to qualify them for that sphere.”—Contempt and ridicule, my dear Henry, are the last

wretched resource of hardened vice and determined libertinism ; and for what do they thus wantonly make a jest of things sacred ?—To raise a laugh—to gain the empty and momentary applause of fools and coxcombs—to eradicate intirely from the minds of youth the last sad remains of a virtuous education ?—How wretched the purpose ! how mean the triumph !

“ May heaven preserve my son from the contagious manners of that gay and busy world, by mixing with which, I fondly flatter myself, he will return with double relish to the rational and elegant pleasures of a domestic life, and the embraces of his ever affectionate

GRANVILLE.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ WELL, Louisa, here I am, in a vortex of delight, in cash, in health, and in spirits. How long they may last, I know not, but am resolved they shall not lie a dead stock on my hands.

“ You are very unkind ;—you, who have not one earthly thing to do, but rise and go to bed, and go to bed and rise—to be a whole week without writing ! Intolerable.—I, whose every moment is precious, can affirm, that I have thought of you at least once every day since we parted. What a noble, what a singular instance of modern friendship !

“ I hear you have been visiting at Hawthornhill.—Pray, my dear, what is become of poor Sir
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William? Is that woe-fraught heart of his still unbroken? Surely it must be made of harder materials than even the flint and adamant, of which he alleges mine is formed.—If no birchen inhabitant of the adjacent wood yet bows under the weight of him and his sorrows, or if there are no hempen cords in the neighbourhood, I will myself remove this obstacle to his release, rather than suffer the poor wretch to pine away, and wither in his bloom. But you need not declare my intentions to the world, as, in the case of such donations, I would hate to appear ostentatious; besides, if he hangs himself at once, he will be deprived of a thousand opportunities of convincing me of the violence of his passion, by being tortured with doubt, racked with fear, drowned in despair, and overwhelmed with apprehension.

“A-propos, of this same disease called Love: do you know, it is actually become epidemical here? and I am not without some apprehension of sharing the general fate.

“The symptoms of this malady are so various, I cannot pretend to enumerate them; but, in order to put you on your guard, I shall mention those that are most frequent.

“Some are seized with silence and stupor; others are inspired with sudden phrenzy. Some feel an insatiable thirst for gold; others are sensible of a violent longing after—the goods and chattels of their neighbours.

“What the ancients thought of this disorder, I cannot say; but they and the moderns differ widely

in their manner of treating it. The former recommended abstinence, change of objects, and, in extremity, death itself. The latter only prescribe a bitter potion called Matrimony, which is found efficacious, even in the most desperate cases. It is, indeed, a severe remedy, and gives the patient such a loathing, that, in case of a relapse, he hardly ever has recourse to it a second time.

" I cannot bear to think of your spending the whole winter in the country.—I protest, Louisa, before the end of it, you will be fit for no other society than that of bats, owls, Thomas-a-Kempis, and dowagers of quality.—What would thousands here give, for a pair of such bright eyes, as you rivet a whole day to your book or embroidery? Turn them at least sometimes towards your pen, ink, and paper, and give more heart-felt pleasure than any which London can afford, to

Your affectionate

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.*

To the same.

" I SIT down to scold you, Louisa; and if you tell me it is an improper occupation for a lady, I can answer, that my propensity is not to be controled. This, you know, is the language of that sex, who pretend to be our superiors in understanding, yet scruple not to plead irresistible impulse, whenever they violate its dictates: Now, as we are allowed to be the weaker vessels, our impulses must confessedly be still more irresistible than theirs.

“ How can you load me so unmercifully with praise ?——When undeserved, as in my case, it becomes the most humiliating censure. But as I am not ignorant of the magical powers of self-love, who, with the same optics, can magnify natural talents to the size of cardinal virtues, and diminish real faults to that of amiable weaknesses, I must warn you not so lavishly to bestow that sweet potion on me, lest the cunning sorcerers convert the balm into aconite.——You should reflect too, my dear girl, that in praising your friend, you are lavishing encomiums on yourself ; for our sentiments are alike on most subjects, and every talent with which nature hath endowed me, you possess in a much superior degree.

“ Here I anticipate a lecture on the part of Humility ; but let that scrupulous virgin consult with her sister Truth, before she enter her caveat against this last sentence. I will then trust my cause to be plead by Friendship, against your advocate, Modesty, whom, in spite of having wronged you a thousand times, you still retain in your service ; and, farther, you may be pleased to inform her, that if she cites me to answer for partiality at the bar of Opinion, I will instantly appeal to Judgment, whose secretary, Common-sense, has assured me, that I shall come off with credit and reputation.

“ Is it not humiliating, Louisa, to the boastful pride of man, to feel how much this ethereal spirit of his is affected by mechanical causes ?——A cold day damps his hopes, a dark one clouds his prospects, and a week of rain drowns him in the depths of despondent melancholy ! But no sooner does the sky clear, the clouds disperse, and the sun shine,

than his hopes revive, his prospects brighten, his dejection vanishes, and the aspect of every object is changed to the eye of his enlivened imagination.

“ Perhaps you will alledge, that mine has directed the pencil, in the piece I have just been drawing. Alas ! no ; Experience traced the outline, and Truth finished the picture.

“ Three days of thick fog have so altered my temper, that I am persuaded the ill success of Sir William’s suit has been occasioned by his making love to me in the month of November.—Mine for you, Louisa, is fixed beyond the reach of every thing, except the chilling frost of indifference ; and I dare venture to affirm, will know no change from times or seasons ; but glow with as equal and fervent a heat, amidst the snows of December, as in the sultry dog-days.—Adieu.

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“ OUR conviction, my dear friend, insensibly coincides with our inclination. You have taught me to believe that my letters give you pleasure : I am too happy in being able to do so, not to embrace every occasion of addressing you. The praises I bestow on you, my dear Lady Charlotte, are from the heart ;—you are sufficiently acquainted with its genuine language, to give credit to this assertion ; and surely would not wish me either to disguise or suppress its dictates, when writing to you.

"I cannot agree with you, 'that in praising you, I am lavishing encomiums on myself.' You forget that we always incline to condemn what we already enjoy, and admire what we do not possess.—I must not, however, be perverse, or attempt to impose on you by my sophistry. However this may hold with respect to the goods of fortune, it does not apply to the gifts of nature. It is confessed, we are all sufficiently disposed to over-value our mental qualifications.

"Do not be afraid to scold me, whenever you think I require such discipline. Though you have heard me confess, that I would suffer extreme pain on being told my faults by a person I loved, from the dread of forfeiting their esteem, this is unpardonable weakness. What friend expects to find us perfect?—and who is so proper to correct, so likely to reform us, as those we love?—Let me conjure you, then, my dear Lady Charlotte, to tell me candidly whenever you see me fall into any error; that I may prove, by my eagerness to amend it, how desirous I am of becoming all you wish me to be.

"Nothing, I am persuaded, is so fatal, either to the interests of love or friendship, as those little disgusts which take their rise from trifles, but which, by alarming the delicacy, and wounding the pride of affection, by being often renewed, increase insensibly to coldness, indifference, dislike....nay, aversion itself. We ought not to expect perfection; but, in all connections of the heart, we ought carefully to avoid giving pain by discovering our own imperfections.

"I intirely agree with my friend, in thinking the observance of the lesser morals highly requisite

in such connections. But, if a very nice attention to these become necessary, will not this occasion restraint? and does not restraint, like a secret poison, impair the very vitals of friendship?—Me thinks, along with that fearfulness of offending, which flows from goodness of heart, there should be an equal aversion to taking offence. Indeed, if we are at pains to examine our own minds, we shall find, that security of meeting with indulgence, is the first thing that prompts to unbounded confidence.

“We are at present on a visit at Lord Salisbury’s; one of the noblest and most extensive estates in this country. But there is an air of fullen and solitary grandeur about it, that depresses the spirits, and dissatisfies the heart.—How unlike the cheerful, hospitable Castle of Hastings!

“The houses of five gentlemen in this neighbourhood are desolate and tenantless, and their estates swallowed up in that of Lord Salisbury. This cruel depopulation deprives him and his family of the most essential blessing of life....an agreeable society.—Ah! if to be feared, disliked, deserted....if to possess a palace whose apartments are uninhabited, a territory where one can never hope to meet ‘the human face divine’....if this is to be rich and great, may heaven preserve from wealth and grandeur.

Your

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To Lord Hastings.

“I HAVE often thought, my dear Henry, that there is not a more surprising principle in the mind

of man, than that by which he is led on from day to day, in pursuit of a felicity; which, in the calm hour of reflection, he will acknowledge to be unattainable whilst on earth.—Despising the blessings which the present offers to his enjoyment, he rests all his hopes upon the future. Yet, alas! what there can he know of the future, than that it will resemble the past, which has already deceived, and grievously disappointed him?

“Mankind, in their eager pursuit after happiness, overlook the means of obtaining it; for this eagerness, leaving them no leisure to form just notions concerning the nature of their chief good, hurries them into a thousand wild and extravagant schemes, absolutely destructive of it. By such men, happiness is believed to consist in a quick succession of rapturous enjoyments, where every desire obtains its completion, and every pursuit is crowned with success.

“Now, it is evident, that such felicity is absolutely incompatible with our present state of discipline, where plenty is the fruit of toil,....health the effect of temperance,....rest the reward of labour,....and pleasure the concomitant of pain;—where virtue must be tried by adversity, and the character formed by frequent acts of fortitude and self-denial.

“But, further; mankind err, in affixing to particular situations and circumstances, the idea of a quality which results from the exercise of worthy and generous affections, and the harmony of a pious and well-regulated mind.

“The same objects do not affect any two of the human species exactly in the same manner.—The

serious and contemplative find their chief enjoyment in the retired walks of life, in exploring the treasures of science, and contemplating the beautiful and sublime of nature.—To the young and gay, society affords a variety of pleasures; the indolent find their's in ease, and the active in business.—— How vain is it then to affirm, that happiness results from a fortunate combination of external circumstances, when we see, that it must vary with every different mode of situation, constitution, and taste.

“ Let us try then, by forming just notions of our present state, to determine what must constitute our greatest happiness: Let us consider ourselves as placed here, not long to suffer, or exquisitely to enjoy; but by properly maintaining our allotted part, to prepare ourselves for future enjoyment.

“ Objects of high gratification are rare, and difficult to be acquired; and our anguish, when deprived of them, must ever be proportionable to the transport they have afforded us. Objects of complacency and satisfaction are always within reach of a benevolent and well-regulated mind; and when Providence demands them from us, we can resign them, without that poignant regret which incapacitates the soul for the enjoyment of such as remain.

“ Let us then endeavour, by habituating ourselves to be satisfied with such temperate pleasures as are easily attained, and suited to our present circumstances, to cultivate that healthful cheerfulness and equality of temper, which disposes us to view the best side of life, which gives a zest to all its innocent pleasures, and which we can never know

whilst restless and unsatisfied we grasp at an imaginary bliss, and forfeit substantial peace, in vainly striving for exquisite enjoyment.

"You tell me, that "bad health has at times an influence, even on the gentle temper of Dr. Melville." Remember, my dear Hastings, it is the peculiar privilege, as well as province of friendship, not only to bear with the little fallies of passion and peevishness, to which all of human kind are liable, but, with superior delicacy, to steal from us our vexations and inquietudes, without seeming to perceive that they exist.

"We are all pretty well, except Miss Seymour, who looks very thin and pale, but assures me she has no complaint. We have been going a round of visits, which, I hope, will amuse her; she is too thoughtful and studious, but always amiable. She joins your mother and me, in wishes for your safety, and regrets for your absence, which seems to be felt by all, but by none more than

Your fondly affectionate father,

GRANTVILLE."

To Miss Seymour.

"THE clock strikes eleven—one hour yet remains of this departing year; let it be an hour of solemn reflection; let it be devoted to my friend!

"How like a confused and troubled dream, do the last twelve months appear?—Ah, Louisa! would

to Hearts they would bear away with them our vain inquietudes and sinful sorrows !—Who can look back on the past, without self-reproach, or anticipate the eventful future, without timid apprehension ?

“ May perfect confidence in the divine goodness, which we have so often experienced, and in the divine wisdom, which we profess to venerate, quiet every anxious wish and turbulent emotion of our souls, and preserve them in that state of cheerful serenity, which philosophy vainly laboured to introduce into the restless heart of man.

“ It was with much reason, my Louisa, that I urged you, whilst young, to extend the circle of your amicable connections. When any of these are dissolved in after-life, the soul revolts from the idea of entering into new alliances, or of suffering the tender, enthusiastic attachments of youth to be succeeded by the dull, frigid, cautious connections of interest or prudence.

“ The fate of the gentle Constance, is a melancholy proof of the danger of resting all our hopes on one object, and deriving all our pleasures from one source.—You know, some time before your arrival in France, she lost her amiable and only friend. Accustomed from childhood to a daily interchange of kind offices, and boundless affection, the death of Agnes not only robbed her of all her enjoyment, but even deprived her of power to enjoy. After vainly struggling, in obedience to duty, to recover the vigour of her exhausted mind, in the tumult of the world, she was permitted to retire from it, and to follow her inclination, in striving to moderate,

in the quiet of retirement, that deep-rooted sorrow, which death alone could cure.

“ I well remember, the first time you saw the silent, dejected mourner, you remarked, that there was something in her very look and manner, which strongly indicated her nearness to heaven—a purity, a sensibility, an abstraction, which convinced one she would not long be a sojourner in this vale of tears.—Accordingly, she has bidden an eternal adieu to it, and, I trust, is again associated with her kindred spirit, in the realms of light, and truth, and love, where their services shall know no interruption, and their felicity no end.

“ The wonderful affection which united the very souls of these friends, was allowed, I fear, to exceed the bounds prescribed by reason and duty. It was such a copious and overflowing tide, as laid waste, or swallowed up in its course, many of those kind and lesser benevolences due to society ; whose sources, perhaps, remained in their hearts, but whose streams were not sufficiently diffused through their lives.

“ The gentle Constance has fallen a victim to the indulgence of that exquisite sensibility, so soothing and flattering to young minds, and which a thousand circumstances, in this region of sorrows, are ever at hand to cherish. From the natural delicacy of her constitution, on which her mind has doubtless had a powerful influence, her peace, her health, even her life, has been sacrificed to this delightful, but fatal tenderness. With this nervousness of soul, it was impossible for her to taste of happiness in a world where vice is so prevalent, and

misfortune so irremediable.—The miseries of human life were to her an insurmountable obstacle to the enjoyment of its blessings : And unless her friends could have borne to see her become less amiable and interesting, they never could hope to behold her more happy.—Joined to this endearing weakness, Constance possessed a temper so reserved, that many mistook for pride what was the effect of diffidence alone. Hence she was less generally beloved than many who were her inferiors in every quality, but that unreservedness, which is as often the effect of a weak and intemperate mind, as of a warm and generous heart.

“ Such was Constance ! So ill fitted for this world, so desirous of another, should those who loved her regret her early escape from this dark region of shadows ? And whilst time, like a silent thief, is daily pilfering from our little hoard of comforts, should we, my Louisa, wish to linger here till he has robbed us of all ?

“ It is the natural effect of grief, to unshackle the mind, and render us superstitious : Were I to indulge the present suggestions of mine, I would believe, that I was not long to survive my friend.—This, my Louisa, is a soothing, but a very selfish idea. When I know that my life is the object of your prayers and wishes, ought not this consideration to give it value in my eyes ?—It shall, my love ; and if Heaven is pleased to prolong it, I will yet indulge the pleasing hope of once more embracing my friend.

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX.”

To Miss Seymour.

“ I THINK I told you lately, Louisa, that matrimony was become epidemical here. They are resolved not only to have me married, but in love too !—Was ever any thing so unreasonable ?—My father dined yesterday at the French ambassador’s, where he was introduced to the young Earl of Leicester, who is just returned from the grand tour ; elegant, polite, handsome, rich ; and, if I may credit the Marquis, he has collected all the improvements, graces, and accomplishments, that ever were acquired by travelling, and brought them home in a bundle, for the good of his countrymen. I hope he will have the charity to bestow some of them on his fellow-peers, who, if want forms a claim, may surely make large demands on his bounty. Perhaps, in return, they may teach him one science, of which, with all his acquirements, he may be still ignorant ; I mean—cookery. I have heard a member of parliament descant more learnedly on a receipt for a patty, than he could have done on the bill of rights ; and lately ate a beef-steak dressed by a peer, which the Grand Monarque’s cook needed not to be ashamed of. Considering the shortness of human life, if a man arrive at perfection in one art, it is all that can reasonably be expected. It would really be unconscionable to suppose that Lord Dale must be both a first-rate cook and a pillar of the state.

“ Tell me, Louisa, my dear, serious girl, how is all going on at the Castle ? Doubtless in the same dull, unvarying round of rational enjoyment and domestic duty. Ah ! my friend, to minds like your’s, these may be satisfactory ; but my pleasures must have a higher flavour, a more poignant relish,

the exquisite zest of dear variety. Tell me honestly, Louisa, do you never envy me the possession of such ?

“ My father is gone to the play : I had devoted this whole evening to you ; was in the very humour for addressing you in the style you love, serious, sententious, and sentimental ; when a servant came to inform me, that Mr. Danvers, a gentleman my father had invited to supper, was in the parlour.

“ It was but just eight—strangers to each other, the prospect was dismal. We canvassed the affairs of state, and amusements of the season, till we found we had worn both subjects thread-bare : We yawned, we fidgeted, we spoke, we were silent, and my chagrin and vexation increased every moment ;—some sulky hints were dropped of letters to write—of the tedious length of the play, &c. &c. Ah, Louisa ! was this like your friend ?—I felt that it was not !

“ This is a stranger, whispered Hospitality.—What injury has he done you ? demanded Justice.—He knows not that he has offended, said Conscience.—He would not have treated you unkindly, sighed that Charity which suffereth long, and is patient.—There was no resisting this plea : My blood took a ‘ moral flow,’ and covered my cheek with blushes ; I summoned every perverse particle that had soured the milk of human kindness in my breast, and exercised them with such fury, as, I trust, will for ever prevent these diabolians from returning.

“ The pure spirit of benevolence now took possession of my heart, and rendered me so docile, that I

accompanied the stranger to Grand Cairo, without one symptom of fatigue or inattention ;—which I fancy is more than you can say, after reading this long letter :—Therefore, adieu.

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

" I PARTICIPATE sincerely, my dear Lady Charlotte, in every thing which contributes to your enjoyment ; but cannot envy you the possession of pleasures which I never could relish. Surely Heaven has annexed to those that are simple and natural, a charm unknown to the votaries of luxury and false refinement.

" Friendship, reflection, devotion, and retirement, supply real enjoyment to a temperate mind ; but the manners, and, far more, the vices of the world, wear off the keen edge of that delicate sensibility which is the general organ by which all exquisite pleasure is conveyed to the soul.

" It is the misfortune of young women in particular, who are trained in the gay world, to have their native abhorrence of vice insensibly lessened, by being familiarised to it, and hearing many things talked of there with ease, which they ought never to think of, but with horror. In particular, they should be left in ignorance, both of the licentious manners of men, and the pernicious and libertine principles on which they pretend to vindicate them. To make girls acquainted with such, is like placing edge-tools in the hands of a child, with which, unable to use them, it will certainly destroy itself.

"Such, in my opinion, ought to be the purity of the female mind, that a virtuous woman would feel herself criminal, in thinking of what a vicious man will not scruple to act.

"But, my dear Lady Charlotte, though I do not share in your turbulent pleasures, think not that I am without your loved variety. In the course of eight weeks, we have visited as many neighbouring families, some of whom would afford subjects suited exactly to your lively pen. We are at present at Squire Randall's, who, to all his other practices, adds that of physic : he compounds an eye-water, in particular, which was never once known to fail, though its qualities are directly opposite to Lethe's, as it smarts the patient too severely to let him forget his care.—It grieves me to see so many caresses and so much white meat, bestowed by the good lady on a parcel of senseless, sorry cats. Heaven seems to have endowed all its creatures with a certain portion of affection, which must be expended : Some lavish it on deserving, some on unworthy objects. A dog, a cat, a man, or a monkey, usually engrosses the hearts of our sex ;—pleasure, interest, ambition, are the idols to which the other sacrifice. Which of us makes the wisest choice, I leave you to determine."

"You tell me, "you can have no conception of a heaven without the society of your friends."—Perhaps, by the time you have known some of them ten years, you may alter your opinion. Meantime, as we are left in ignorance of celestial enjoyments, I think you have as good a right as your neighbours, to form an elysium to your mind ; and, perhaps, may be as near the truth, as those sublime theolo-

gifts, who give us as minute a description of paradise as if they had just returned from thence.

"My dear Lady Charlotte, I have asked you twenty times, without receiving an answer. When do you think of returning to the country?—I begin to have no small jealousy of Lord Leicester.—Would my heart were as light as your head, and your absence as short as your memory!—Adieu.—In all situations and humours, continue to remember your truly affectionate

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Lord Hastings.

"I SHARE in your pleasures, my dear Henry, whilst wandering with a tender and reverential melancholy, through scenes for ever hallowed by the efforts of genius, valour, and virtue. To tread those paths where every foot is classic ground, cannot fail to inspire a mind like your's with those sublime ideas, and solemn reflections, which are akin to those exalted spirits we then admire; and which by freely communicating, you give pride, as well as joy, to the heart of your father.

"What you tell me of the miserable fate of Talbot shocks me beyond measure. How short, how shameful has been his career! how guilty, how dreadful its close!—What a melancholy proof does he exhibit of the fatal effects of early and vicious habits.

"Though passion is a violent and insolent master, it will sometimes relax of its severity; but habit is

an obdurate and relentless tyrant, that holds the mind enslaved in cruel and perpetual bondage.

" Besides the unbounded indulgence of criminal propensities, another cause has contributed to the ruin of the wretched Talbot. You know his mind, naturally active and inquiring, was early poisoned by the maxims of modern philosophy and scepticism. Surely men are not aware of the consequences, when they publish their libertine opinions to the world. They usually claim the title of moral men; but what can be more immoral than such conduct? Their metaphysical subtleties, and sophistical arguments, are only calculated to lull the voice of conscience, and give scope to every lawless appetite to tyrannise with impunity. Meanwhile, the unhappy vulgar, deprived alike of ability and leisure for reflection, and prone to indulge to the same excesses, implicitly acquiesce in the opinions, and eagerly follow the example of their superiors. What should we think of the man, who could snatch from the sinking mariner, the plank on which his last hope depended?—Inhuman, far more inhuman is he, who, in midst of the dangers which continually surround us, can rob us of that hope which is the anchor of the soul, and plunge us in the perplexity of doubt and horror of despair.

" The bulk of our species, my dear Henry, employ themselves, not in abstract speculation, but in concerting schemes of pleasure and amusement: they affix the idea of happiness to the possession of certain favourite objects, and expect, with impatience the hour that shall ensure their felicity, by the completion of their wishes: that hour arrives; but, alas! it brings only heaviness and disappoint-

ment. Again they indulge the same fond hopes, again renew the unsuccessful chace, till, tired at length of their vain pursuits, they resign themselves, in old age, to peevish discontent, and, without hope or comfort, drop unlamented in the grave.

“How different is the course of that man, whose conduct is regulated by true wisdom—who considers this life in connection with the next—who moderates his desires, and preserves the powers of his mind in equal balance!——His wishes can never be disappointed, because the object of them is immutable; his schemes can never be frustrated, because they are built on the foundation of truth; and time, which accelerates the destruction of all things mortal, speeds on the hour of his safety, his triumph, his everlasting joy!

“We are once more returned to the Castle, with that sweet satisfaction which home affords to those who are happy in their domestic connections, and endowed by heaven with the true relish for happiness.

“We have found all your favourites in health, and wanting you, bestow on them the kindness due to their master. I ride Sorrel with much pleasure during the fine weather. Old Cato, in imperial state and ease, rests on a cushion, by the side of the fire, in your mother's dressing room;—and little Phyllis is fed every day by the fair hand of Miss Seymour, whom she gratefully caresses, and attends in all her solitary rambles.

“Farewel, my beloved son;—may the Supreme Disposer of all events render the journey of life

both pleasant and prosperous, as far as may be safe for you ! So prays sincerely

Your affectionate father,

GRANVILLE."

To Miss Seymour.

" ALL is over, Louisa !—my fate is determined—Lord Leicester is the man.—But to proceed in order.

" I have been in the most delightful hurry these eight days past, making preparations for my first appearance at court. Accordingly I was presented yesterday, and just as I was returning to the bottom of the circle, to avoid those scrutinising eyes that were turned on me from every quarter, mine encountered the most striking figure I ever beheld.—I could be at no loss with regard to the person, who was no other than the Earl of Leicester himself.—He had waited a few minutes at the lower end of the room, till the ceremony of my introduction was over, and then went through the same himself, with a grace and dignity that drew upon him a number of encomiums, and shewed that he was familiar in the courts of princes.

" He was received very graciously by the sovereign, who conversed with him for several minutes ;—he then paid his compliments in the politest manner to my father, who brought him round, and presented him to me.—I know not what was the matter, Louisa ; but I felt myself far more embarrassed with his notice, than that of his Majesty.

“We are to sup together this evening at the Duke of Marlborough’s: I shall then be able to tell you a little more of my mind. If his intellects bear any proportion to his form and manners, I am undone!—But as I cannot be in love with a fool, and he is an earl, I have two chances in favour of my freedom.

“So our sage, philosophical friend has got a son!—Poor little urchin, it has made its appearance too soon in the world, and I fear will hardly have fair play for continuing in it. I suppose, by this time, its learned father, in the sublimity of metaphysical madness, is busied in investigating the cause of its first squall, exploring the number of its innate ideas, analysing the milk with which it is nourished, correcting its propensities, thwarting its desires, and, by grieving its nurse, provoking its aunts, and perplexing its mother, is converting the joyful gratulations of the whole female gossip, into sullen murmurs, discontent, and disappointment.—Were I his wife, I should consent to his amusing himself in his study with plans of education, as absurd and impracticable as any of those with which vanity and ignorance have pestered mankind;—but would surely contend for the exclusive possession of my little treasure during the first year, when an infant is confessedly the most improper of all subjects for whom to try experiments upon.

“After experiencing the warmth of June in the end of February, the cold of last week has been intolerably severe, and has occasioned universal murmurs.—Thus, when the cold blasts of misfortune assail us, we forget the days of sunshine we have

enjoyed, and convert the past bounty of Heaven into means of increasing our present discontents. . . .)

"You see, Louisa, it is possible for a fine lady sometimes to be serious.

"Be assured, in every situation, circumstance, and humour, you are remembered, esteemed, and beloved, by

Your

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

"INDEED, my dear Lady Charlotte, I am inclined to echo your opinion.—Yes, your fate is determined, and "Lord Leicester is the man."—A friend of Lord Granville, who met with him abroad, has given me his character in terms that might soothe even the partial ear of a mistress.—I long to hear your's; as I do not think you are yet so much in love, as to make me distrust the evidence either of your judgment or senses.

"Lord Granville came into the room some days ago, with a letter from his son in his hand, containing an account of the shocking fate of Sally's seducer, Talbot, with whom Lord Hastings had been acquainted at college. Having involved himself so much by every species of extravagance, that he could not any longer continue in England, he borrowed a considerable sum from his young friends, on pretence of going to take possession of an estate in Wales, left him by a relation; and embarking at Dover, made the best of his way to Paris.—As his

sage for gaining was unconquerable, he soon was discovered to have money, by a company of sharpers, who fleeced him of every guinea. That evening on which he lost his last stake, he went home and wrote a letter to his unhappy father, attempting to justify his conduct on the principles of modern infidelity. He then, with his own hand, put an end to that life, which guilt had rendered obnoxious to others, and a burden to himself.—Ah ! my friend, what a dismal, what a shocking exit !

“Ye, whom the love of fame, or pride of singularity, conducts into the dismal labyrinths of error, in pity to mankind, remain contented with your fancied superiority—your boasted discoveries. But leave them, O leave them, in happy ignorance ! Expose not them to the perplexity of doubt, or the anguish of suspense. Deprive them not of those consolatory hopes, obscure not to them those glorious prospects, which alone can render life supportable. Consider, that with one half of your species, the hope of the future is all of good the present affords.—Alas ! would you then wish to deprive them of their all ?

“My dear Lady Charlotte, ought we to speak of distress, with whose sorrow neither guilt nor shame is mingled ?—When we shed the tear of nature or friendship over those we love, we feel our virtues increased, our sentiments ennobled, by the generous sorrow ;—but who dare mention the name of Talbot to his afflicted father, or renew his shame, and redouble his anguish, by expressing compassion ?

“Happy are they, who, amidst the darkness and perplexity of this tedious journey, keep their eyes

fixed on that land of rest to which it conducts them.—Who neither annoy their fellow-travellers by unkindness nor injustice; but, by a thousand gentle and quiet attentions, strive to lighten their burdens, and beguile the length of the way—and who, by every new discovery of human error and frailty, learn to be more watchful over themselves, and more indulgent to the weakness of others.—Adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Lord Hastings.

"ON going into the library this morning, I found your friend, Miss Seymour, seated there, with her favourite Shakespeare, whose *Twelfth Night* she was reading; and whose touching portrait of Viola she at present resembles more nearly than we could wish.—She has lost much of her usual blooming, healthy aspect, which gives us much concern. She is truly a most amiable and intelligent young creature, and almost tempts me to dispute our sex's claim to superior judgment and abilities.

"For my part, the more I know of the world, the more equality I discover between the sexes; and it must be allowed the other have this in their favour, that with hearts more susceptible, and judgments less informed, they are often able, through the strength of principle alone, to resist and conquer those passions, to which we give unbounded licence, in spite of that superior strength of mind, by which we pretend to be distinguished.

"The characteristics of the two sexes are widely different:—to ours belong the bold, hardy, active

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virtues ; to theirs the patient, gentle, amiable graces.—How absurd is it then to draw comparisons between the two, when the comparative excellence of each must depend on their dissimilitude?

“ The female heart, my dear Henry, is naturally tender and unsuspecting ; and before mixing with the world, ignorance of its manners, vanity, or self-love, often leads young women to construe into marks of a particular preference, those little attentions and gallantries, which result from complacency and good breeding alone.—Let me advise you, when in company with the other sex, to avoid too minute complaisance—to wrap yourself up in your natural reserve, and rather to appear less amiable, than you may prove more truly estimable.—Wonder not at this advice ; it flows from observation and long acquaintance with life. You can hardly conceive the distress in which many women have been involved by the vanity and inconsiderateness of men—of men, too, who would shrink with horror from the idea of cruelty, at the very instant, when, by their misleading and too pointed attentions, they are laying the foundation of misery in those gentle bosoms, whose most ardent wish is their happiness.

“ Your observation is certainly just ;—our passions are always superficial in their inquiries, and impetuous in their sallies. Reason, on the contrary, is accurate and slow. Hence the former often mislead the mind, before the latter arrives to direct it in the right path.—Miserable state of man ! exclaims the caviller : how useless that boasted faculty !—too tardy to oppose our impulses, it comes but as upbraid us for yielding to them.

"Such complaints, however, are as ill-founded as they are peevish.—Granvillence has assigned us another co-adjutor in the task of self-government—conscience—which remonstrates against every vicious tendency, with a promptitude which equals thought in quickness. Let us submit, then, to the tuition of this faithful instructor. He is the Almighty's delegate, and therefore his dictates must be right. Mankind may indeed wrest his language to guilty purposes; but this does not disparage him; on the contrary, it is an evidence of his integrity; for if his obvious meaning were not reprehensive of their vices, they would hardly be at so much pains to misinterpret his speech.

"May we, my son, ever listen attentively to his gentlest remonstrances; and act such a part now as shall secure his future approbation.—Adieu.

GRANVILLE."

To Miss Seymour.

"MY Louisa will undoubtedly be anxious to know something more than common report, of a man, who already interests the heart of her friend, and who distinguishes me by a preference equally obvious and flattering.

"Lord Leicester discovers, on every occasion, a sound judgment and a correct taste;—a delicate sense of propriety, a constant, not too eager desire to oblige, arising from a wish to make others happy, rather than to be distinguished himself; a refined humanity, a just discernment, and, above all, a mo-

deity so engaging and unassuming, as adds a lustre to his other good qualities.—These I have already had opportunity to discriminate; and, you may believe, am inclined to give him credit for at least a hundred more.

“Whilst we were sitting yesterday on one of the benches in the Park, a genteel young woman, whose countenance expressed the deepest sorrow, approached; with a little child in her hand, who seemed extremely fatigued; but on seeing the bench occupied, was about to retire.—To the unfortunate, more than ordinary attention is due.—I begged her to sit down, and Lord Leicester, with great humanity, took the sweet little boy on his knee. Good-manners prevented me from asking any questions of the afflicted lady, whose spirits seemed so depressed, that it was with difficulty she could restrain her tears. In a few minutes the child got up, and, taking hold of her hand, “Come, mamma,” said he, in a cheerful tone, “I am able to walk now—let us go home to poor papa.” She rose to thank me; but on attempting to speak, the anguish of her heart denied her utterance, and she burst into a flood of tears.—I begged to know the cause of her extreme agitation, and assured her I should feel myself happy in the power either to assist or relieve her.

“She told me, that she was neice to Lord H—, whom, by marrying an officer of family but no fortune, she had for ever disoblighd: That her husband, whose name was Williams, having received a wound in his breast, which intirely ruined his health, was obliged to return to England, where he had languished in all the misery which neglect, poverty, and disease can inflict on a noble and ingen-

uous spirit : That she had made many applications to her uncle, and their other great friends, or rather relations, who had not only refused them assistance, but, by insolence and contempt, had embittered all their sufferings.

“ Gracious Heaven ! is it not enough to make the noble mind feel the whole weight of dependence, by being forced, with shame, to implore that relief which ought to be voluntarily bestowed ? Must the breaking heart be torn with unkindness ? Must unmerited contempt and reproach render the cup of grief, and the bread of misery, still more bitter ?---Is it really then, in the eyes of this generation, a crime to be poor ?---Surely, to revile the unfortunate, is to reproach that Being by whom the lot of every creature is disposed !

“ We accompanied Mrs. Williams to the entry of Spring-garden, where my carriage waited. On handing me in, Lord Leicester begged me to stop a few minutes, whilst, with an attentive humanity worthy of himself, he carried Mrs. Williams and her son into the neighbouring coffee-house, and procured them some refreshment. We then set them down near Golden-square, where Lord Leicester assured her, he would soon wait on Captain Williams..

“ It is alledged, that prosperity renders us careless of the happiness of our fellow-creatures. For my part, Louisa, I have ever felt my concern for the welfare of others, bear a proportion to my own felicity. Nor is this wonderful : Conscious that, for wise ends, Heaven hath so constituted mankind, that they cannot so cordially sympathise in our joys.

as our sorrows, we are afraid to forfeit the benevolent regards of our species, by appearing to triumph in that prosperity, which places us beyond the reach of their good offices. Hence the strong propensity we feel, to aggravate the account of our distresses, and to touch lightly on those peculiar marks of good fortune, by which we may be distinguished.

“ You once told me, that to receive obligations, gave you pain ; which you attributed to the pride of your heart. Favours and obligations, my dear Louisa, are terms unknown to real friendship. To bestow a favour on a friend, is to confer happiness on one’s self ; and to receive an obligation, is in some measure to repay it, by supplying one’s friend with an opportunity of tasting the most refined pleasure.

“ But though I respect too highly every feeling of your heart, ever willingly to do violence to any of them, it surely cannot give you pain to accept of a very small gift from one, who is ambitious of a very large share of your esteem ; and who means not this trifle as expressive of her regard, but of her earnest desire of being sometimes remembered by you, while at a distance ;—but should I indeed offend you by my present, in your indulgence I will trust for my pardon. I flatter myself too, that your justice is equal to your clemency ; and, therefore, that you will believe me unfeignedly your loving, admiring, devoted friend,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To the same.

“ YOU date your last letter, “ eight o’clock, Sunday evening,” and maliciously inquire, “ how I

am employed at that hour?"—Fie, fie, Louisa; was this done in the spirit of christian charity?—Can you have any doubt about the matter? But lest you should, I will honestly inform you.

"Know then, that at eight o'clock on Sunday evening, I was employed—not like you, in saying my prayers, or reading dull sermons; for that I had dispatched already—not in supplying the want of cards by want of compassion and principle, and, under pretence of harmless conversation, tearing to pieces the reputation of my neighbors—not very like a saint, nor yet like a sinner—not quite like an angel, nor just like a devil;—but, like a being who is a compound of all the four....A WOMAN: In short, I was employed in trying on a charming new cap at the glass, in which I was to meet Lord Leicester next morning, to take our accustomed walk in the Park.

"Do not think, however, I am altogether neglectful of my duties and devotions: I have just been reading over the service for matrimony, and considering the matter in a more serious light than I have ever done before. To love and honour, seem very easy terms in the matrimonial compact, but our sex boggle at the fearful word *obey*. Now, for my part, Louisa, I think the whole difficulty lies in the two first articles: Obedience is the natural effect of respect and affection; and if we cannot obey from love, we must from fear; but how few are there among the other sex, whom we can swear through life to love?

"You accuse me of indolence in not writing; and that which you condemn as a fault, comprehends I know not how many virtues: Patience,

mortification, and self-denial.—Indeed, my dear, the continual interruptions I meet with, call forth all these into exercise, when they force me to forego one of my chief enjoyments.

“For once, however, I can resign my pen with pleasure, even though employed in writing to you. Would you were here, to share in the pleasure which this agreeable intruder conveys to the heart of

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

To Miss Seymour.

“IT is long since I addressed my friend—that friend, who takes so tender an interest in all my sorrows!

“Bad health gives a depressing languor to the mind, which indisposes it for every exertion.

“This season, Louisa, this enchanting season awakens the remembrance of the past, and renews all my poignant and deep-rooted sorrows!—It was the season Grammont admired—it witnessed the commencement of the tenderest, truest affection, that ever warmed two human hearts.

“I see all nature reviving around me; but to me the soul of nature seems fled. I strive to speak the delight I used to feel—but there is no one to hear me! I wander where we often wandered together—I listen for the voice of Grammont—I mark the flowers he planted—but the hand that tended them, and the tongue which blessed me, are silent in the dust!

"I fear, Louisa, I greatly fear, this idol of my affections has been to me that ALL IN ALL, which the blessed Source of existence and perfection should alone be to his rational offspring.

"All nature revives, but soon shall it reach its prime, and hasten to decay.—Louisa, the renovation which awaits us, will tend equally to our duration and felicity. O happy, happy state! when we shall be no more liable to error, exposed to danger, nor subject to death! When we shall be perfect in virtue, incorruptible in substance, immortal in felicity!

"Oh, Grammont! pure and exalted spirit! art thou still conscious to the sentiments of that heart thou lovedst, and which ever, ever must love thee?—Dost thou witness the generous joy of my soul, which exults in the reflection, that thou art for ever exempted from the bitter sorrows which overwhelm mine? Dost thou behold me checking every selfish regret, striving to support with courage that life I can no longer enjoy, confiding in the divine goodness, and acquiescing in the divine will?—Surely, if thou art conscious of these sentiments, thou must approve of them, as worthy of her thou lovedst; and to know that she merits thy approbation, must enhance to thee even the joys of heaven.—Didst thou, even in the hour of death, strive to restore my peace, and shall I do nothing to regain it?—Is it by my tears alone that I am to preserve and consecrate thy memory?—Oh, no; I will strive, by imitating thy virtues, to shew that I have profited by thy example; that I hope ere long to be admitted to thy beloved society.

"My heart speaks to my friend, and will not be restrained. This dangerous subject too much engrosses it. At present I can write on no other—therefore adieu.

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX."

To the same.

"THE disordered and agitated state in which I last wrote, was but too apparent to my friend.—But be not disquieted on my account—I have once more regained my usual tranquillity ; and if I am not happy, I am at least serene.

"When any terrestrial object is suffered to usurp the whole dominion of the heart, the intellectual œconomy is utterly deranged, and the balance of the mind destroyed : passion prevails over reason ; prejudice obscures judgment, and inclination is substituted in the place of conscience. Ought I then to consider as a misfortune, the only event which could restore me to my God and my duty, without giving me a severe idea of his government ?

"We fondly flatter ourselves that we have overcome the world, because, in times of deep distress, we feel a perfect indifference to its pleasures and pursuits. But, alas ! though our deceitful passions may a while be lulled to rest, they will again be awakened by their proper objects, and, like a man swimming against a stream, we must either struggle hard to overcome its violence, or be borne back by its current.

"To fly in time of danger to a superior Being, is not the result of reasoning alone, but the imme-

diatè impulse of nature. How ought I to bless that kind and pitying Father, who, by making me feel the emptiness of earthly enjoyment, is bringing me gently back to himself; and who hath placed me here in circumstances so comfortable, as to exclude that solicitude about the future, which might prevent me from improving the present! Blessed be God, though to all, the enjoyment of the present is not permitted, yet, by all, the hope of the future may be indulged.

"Thus it is, my Louisa, that the lots of mankind, however various, are in some degree equal. The beneficent Parent of the universe hath allotted to all his creatures a portion of good; hath sweetened with health the cup of poverty, made plenty the reward of industry, and hope the companion of toil; and, by withholding the pleasures of taste and science, hath precluded from the heart of the labourer many of those restless desires, disgusts, and inquietudes, which poison the enjoyment of his more refined, but less happy lord.

"Adieu, my Louisa. I have now no friend to listen to my complaints; to suggest excuses for a passion too fondly indulged, a sorrow too long protracted. Day after day insensibly comes to a close; one year steals upon another; yet a little while, and time itself shall be swallowed up in the vast ocean of eternity!—Let us reflect on the shortness of life, and resignation will scarce seem a virtue.—Adieu.

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX."

To Lady Charlotte Villiers.

"THE agreeable method you take to correct the errors of your friend, cannot fail to insure my reformation.—I accept your elegant present with sincere pleasure, and abjure my former heterodox opinions ; convinced, that if they were to become general, there would be no room, in the world for two most exalted virtues, generosity and gratitude.

"I am charmed with the active benevolence of Lord Leicester ; which, in procuring a pension for Captain Williams, will probably excite some of his relations to exert themselves in behalf of his numerous young family : shame often acts more powerfully on mankind than principle.

"Why, oh why do the men of the world, the professed votaries of pleasure, deny themselves the exquisite delight arising from the indulgence of benevolence ? Why destroy, by their excesses, their native relish of the tender and elegant pleasures which flow from the exercise of the generous and social affections ?—To a feeling heart, benevolence is a spring of pure and constant satisfaction ; nor do I know any scene so proper for its indulgence as the country. In towns and cities, the distresses of our fellow-creatures are so often the consequence of their vices, that, though principle and humanity may induce us to relieve them, we cannot feel for them that tender complacency and good-will which constitutes my idea of benevolence. In the country, we can both judge of the desert of those who claim our pity, adjust our relief to their circumstances, and enjoy the refined and exquisite pleasure of seeing the happy fruits of our beneficence.

“Were I inclined to indulge that indolence of which you accuse me, I might use the common plea of having nothing to say ; for at present I am as much a recluse, as if immured within the walls of a convent. But whatever arts conscience may acquire from residing with the gay and polite in town (if ever he resides there) we cannot teach him to be silent, when we wish, here in the country. He stares me rudely in the face, whenever I attempt forming such frivolous excuses for laziness ; and at this moment is so impertinent as to remind me, that the plea of having nothing to say, could never be admitted on the part of a woman, unless when in church, or asleep.—To say truth, Lady Charlotte, I and conscience are of the same mind for once. It is affirmed of some bodies, that, by their extreme velocity, they expend their force in a short time ; but I have never heard that a woman’s tongue was of that number,—and, from my own observation, I should incline to think, that, in this instance, activity and heat increase motion.

“ I smile, my dear friend, to think on the different manner in which you and I spend our time : Whilst you are arranging the œconomy of your toilet, I am visiting my dairy, or feeding my poultry ;—whilst you are hurried in preparing for an assembly, I am carelessly wandering towards nurse’s cottage ;—whilst you are listening with rapture to the warbling voice, or delicate concerto, I am hearkening to the tremendous roar of the wind, through the high trees that surround Castle Hastings ;—whilst your eyes sparkle at the sight of beaux, belles, and radiant lustres, my eyes are fixed on the pale lamp of evening ;—whilst you are plunging into
I am, &c.

the gaieties of this world, I am almost sighing after the peaceful repose of the next.

"Think not by this comparison, I mean to depreciate your merit and advance my own ; neither of us can claim praise on account of following our inclination. Let us admire, however, the wisdom of Providence, which, by diversifying our tastes, prevents many dangerous competitions.

"Adieu ; and judge of the extent of my affection by the length of my letter.

Your

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Miss Seymour.

—"WELL, Louisa, all things go on swimmingly.—I really never saw so sensible and agreeable a man as Lord Leister : his choice is sufficient to prove the first, and his eyes tell me every moment that he thinks the very same of me. How fortunate it is, Louisa, when two such people are of one mind !

"The world has already determined the match, and, though without consent of the parties, you know one must pay a due regard to the opinion of the world—when it happens to be one's own ; tho' in affairs of this nature, it generally decides, before the parties themselves know any thing of the matter.

"For my part, Lord Leister shall have my yea and amen, to take Lady Charlotte Villiers, for better, for worse, as soon as he pleases. She has long been a troublesome and vexatious companion to me ;

and that I have not sooner got rid of her, has been none of my fault, as all the world can witness.—As I never yet could make her what I wished, and have little hopes of a change from time, I have advised her to turn all her thoughts towards a future state—(N. B. I do not mean Heaven—you cannot mistake me so far ; neither do I at present think of purgatory.)—And I flatter myself, that, when all connection between her and I shall cease, Lord Leicester will find in his wife, a more agreeable companion, a more docile pupil, a more sincere friend, and a more amiable woman, than I have hitherto found in Lady Charlotte Villiers.

“Heavens, Louisa ! is it really possible that the gay, young, beautiful Miss Stanley is married to Lord Anson ?—I must have more than newspaper authority, before I can credit so monstrous, so preposterous an event.—Assuredly, Louisa, our sex hold it as part of their creed, that marriage is essential to salvation, and that there is no place in Heaven for old maids.

“That I may not be behind-hand with the world in congratulations, I send you a billet, fabricated in such a manner as will neither do violence to my friendship nor ingenuity ; and beg you will convey it to her without delay.

“*Madam,*

“ON this joyful and singular occasion, permit me to join the circle of your friends, in wishing that your happiness may be greater than your merit, and exceed even your most sanguine expectation.

“I have long entertained a high opinion of your sense and prudence,—an opinion in which the whole

world will readily acquiesce, now that you have preferred your interest to every other consideration. You judged rightly that you was past fifteen, the age of romance, and therefore love would have been superfluous in your list of marriage articles. If there be any virtue in self-denial and mortification, you have laid in a stock that will last for life ; and if the consciousness of virtue be its reward, your's must be a rich one.—If it can add to happiness like your's, to reign unrivalled, I will venture to presage, that you will have no competitor for the possession of your empire : Your lot will indeed be singular, for your felicity will be unenvied ; not will even the most covetous or malicious seek to deprive you of it.

“ I am, Madam, with all that respect and esteem due to merit, courage, and fortitude like your's,

Your very humble admirer,

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS.”

Whilst Miss Seymour was amusing herself with her friend's letter in the pavilion, a servant hastily entered, and informed her, that Lord Granville was suddenly taken ill, and his lady begged to see her immediately in his apartment.—Louisa entered the room in great agitation, and was dreadfully alarmed, on seeing Lord Granville, pale and faint, supported in the arms of his afflicted wife, whose countenance sufficiently expressed the terror and anguish of her mind. He had complained of sickness, whilst reading to her in the library, and immediately on reaching his apartment, fainted away. After being put to bed, Lady Granville retired a

few minutes to give vent to those tears which she could no longer restrain, and left Louisa sitting by the bed-side. No sooner was she gone, than Lord Granville, opening the curtain, made a motion for Louisa to approach : she did so ; when, taking hold of her hand, which he tenderly pressed between his, " My dear Miss Seymour," said he, " this is no time for ceremony or disguise—Lady Granville's distress overwhelms me ; I cannot bear to add to her affliction, by telling her the truth. You must be to her a daughter ;—believe me, amiable Louisa, I have long loved you as such.——I have seen the growing tenderness of Hastings, and I have seen it with pleasure ;—you are worthy of each other. When he returns to solicit your hand, let him be assured, that his choice met with my warmest approbation."

The variety of strong and conflicting passions which this discourse awakened in the bosom of Louisa, deprived her for some time of the power of utterance. She knelt by the bed, and, taking Lord Granville's hand, which she kissed and bathed with her tears, " Live, oh live, my Lord," cried she, " to witness and confirm that happiness you have so generously bestowed !"

This tender scene was interrupted by the entrance of Lady Granville, which left Louisa at liberty to retire, and compose the perturbation of her mind.

The anguish of suspense was not added to the exquisite sorrow of Lady Granville : her husband was seized with another fit ; from which he only recovered so far, as to pray for blessings on her and his son, and take a last, tender farewell. He then,

with equal fortitude and resignation, prepared to meet his fate ; which soon succeeded, and deprived his family and society of a life unspeakably dear to the one, and highly valuable to the other.

Providence has wisely constituted us in such a manner, that the necessary exertion of the mind, in times of distress, seems to support the feebleness of the body ;—but when the attention of the former is no longer engaged, the powers of the latter feel utterly exhausted.—Thus it fared with Lady Granville. All the compassionate tenderness and sympathy of Louisa, were unable to support her under the weight of this unexpected and dreadful blow. She sunk for a while into the most deplorable melancholy ; from which she was only roused by the most painful apprehensions on account of her son, whom disordered imagination represented as involved in dangers, languishing in sickness, or sinking under the stroke of death.

To a mind thus debilitated, it was in vain to offer either the suggestions of reason, or the consolations of religion. Louisa contented herself with testifying the silent sorrow and kind, unremitting attentions of friendship.—Alas ! how feeble is reason, opposed to feeling ? Neither the conviction of the understanding, nor the assent of the will to the wisdom and rectitude of the Divine dispensations, can, for some time, calm the restless desires of the heart, secure its peace, or restore it when lost.

Harassed perpetually with images of horror, and disposed to lean for support on her last remaining prop, Lady Granville felt, that without the presence of her son, she could never enjoy one moment's

quiet. She therefore wrote, to acquaint him with his misfortune, and intreated his immediate return, that his tenderness might at least alleviate the affliction which his presence alone could enable her to support.

The letter found him at Rome. He hesitated not a moment about complying with her request; but, in the mean time, dispatched the following billet, to inform her of his health and safety, and assure her of that respect and affection which, he was conscious, became doubly due to a parent in her situation.

To Lady Granville.

—"I WILL not attempt painting, to my tenderly beloved parent, that grief, of which her own heart will give her but too just an image: I even fear to add to your extreme affliction, by the expressions of my own. The pleasures of memory, the tenderness of friendship; above all, the consolations of religion, are your's. Let them, dearest Madam, have their full influence.

"In the attentions and sympathy of Miss Seymour, you will doubtless find all the comfort on this occasion, which the balm of pity can pour into the wounds of grief. Soon shall my dearest cares be joined with her's, to sooth and support you, at this most afflicting period;—soon shall you be convinced, that it is the most ardent desire of my heart, and shall be the unremitting study of my life, to make you happy.

" May God long preserve my dear mother, and restore to her affectionate bosom, her dutiful, affectionate, and sympathizing son,

HASTINGS."

Lord Hastings (so we shall continue to call him) the moment he arrived in Paris, flew directly to the convent of St. Cire. In the midst of the gloom which grief for the loss of his revered father occasioned, he saw certain gleams of hope and joy appearing, which were too intimately connected with his happiness, not to divide his feelings, and influence his conduct.

Louisa received the following letter from Adelaide, the day before he reached England :

To Miss Seymour.

" AT length, my beloved, my admirable friend, your singular and superior virtues are going to meet with their just reward : The amiable Hastings has this moment left me. He acquainted me with the death of his father ; and, whilst he expatiated on his worth and tender affection, the tear of filial piety and sorrow trembled in his eye, and forced its way down his manly cheek.

" Why, my friend, should men blush to betray marks of that sensibility, they so greatly admire in our sex ?—However modelled by education, or restrained by custom, are not the leading features of the human mind the same in all the human species ?—Let others applaud that stoical firmness, for which men are more frequently indebted to constitution than philosophy ; I shall always think his

character the most perfect, who unites sensibility with fortitude, and whose heart is ever ready to correct the severe strictures which his judgment is forced to make on the conduct of others.

"He again introduced the subject of Rochelle. 'I know, Madam,' said he, 'you have long been the bosom friend of Miss Seymour. May I presume to ask whether there did not once subsist a very tender attachment between her and the Count?'—'Indeed, my Lord,' said I, 'they are almost intimate strangers to each other.'—'Good Heavens!' exclaimed he, passionately, 'what am I to think?'—Then, after a pause, 'It is in vain, Madam,' continued he, 'to attempt concealing from you the tender interest my heart takes in every thing that concerns Miss Seymour.—Oh! might I, consistently with honour, with delicacy, entreat to know, whether that gentle heart is still disengaged?'—'My Lord,' interrupted I, 'this subject is too tender to be longer insisted upon.'—'I confess it,' replied he; 'I implore your forgiveness; but surely the gentle Adelaide will pity the torment I suffer from suspense, and the dreadful distraction and confusion of my thoughts; surely she may say, consistently even with that sacred friendship I revere, whether there be any other attachment?—My whole earthly happiness depends——' I rose; and, retiring from the grate to hide my emotion, which almost equalled his, 'If Miss Seymour, Sir,' said I, 'has formed any attachment, Lord Hastings cannot doubt that the object of her preference must be such a one as will justify her both to the world and her own heart.'—After again conjuring me to forgive a fault, which he seemed every moment in hazard of repeating, he took his leave, telling me, that he hoped

from my generosity a share of that friendship, which his behaviour would convince me he could not claim from my justice.

“ Whilst you read this letter, my dearest Louisa, I see your delicacies all in arms, and your heart throbbing with apprehension ; but what, my friend, had you to fear from your Adelaide ? Does not this heart respect every tender emotion of your’s ? Am not I capable of guarding the most sacred of all deposits, the honour, the delicacy of a friend ? Believe me, your’s is not more safe in your own possession than in mine.

“ All the happiness I can now enjoy, must be derived from that of my friends : your’s, I trust, will soon be complete : I would pray that it might be lasting, but correct the vain, presumptuous wish, and resign the disposal of your lot and my own, to that Wisdom which cannot err.

“ What consolation would it afford me, could I once more behold and converse with you ! Perhaps, even in this region of sorrow and disappointment, this happiness may yet await me ; at least I will encourage the pleasing hope. Hope, my Louisa, is the refreshing cordial of life. Ah ! how insupportable without it !—Hope animates us in every pursuit, sustains us under every trial ; is our first guide, and latest friend. /

“ Amidst all the vicissitudes of this perplexing scene, may that hope be ours which will never deceive ! Adieu, best and dearest of friends.

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX.”

The day after receiving this letter, Louisa arose very early, and strove to attain sufficient composure to meet Lord Hastings, without betraying any of those violent emotions, with which her heart throbb'd the moment she thought of seeing him. Tho' she sat in the same room with Lady Granville, absent and silent, she started at every little noise, and seem'd perplexed how to answer the simplest question. The moment she heard a chaise drive into the yard, her heart took the alarm, and she grew so faint, that she was obliged to retire into Lady Granville's dressing-room. She heard Lord Hastings enter the apartment she had just quitted, and forgot her own feelings, to sympathise in those of the friends she loved.

"Though Lady Granville had summoned her utmost fortitude to her aid, she could not again behold her son without sinking almost under the violence of the different passions with which she was agitated.—His soothing tenderness at length compos'd her spirits; and, after the first violence of their grief was abated, Lady Granville desired her son to go and fetch Louisa. "To the care and affection of the most amiable of women," said she, "you owe the preservation of your surviving parent; go, my Henry, and acknowledge the obligation."

He entered the dressing-room, where Louisa was sitting more dead than alive; but his own perturbation prevented him from discovering her's. He approached, and taking hold of her hand, which he pressed to his lips, "How, Miss Seymour," said he, "O, how can I express my sense of your friendship and tenderness to the best of women? May heaven repay you a thousand fold!"—"Indeed, my Lord,"

replied she, "I must be lost to gratitude, when I feel any pleasure equal to that of giving comfort to Lady Granville!"—His eyes sufficiently spoke the grateful sensibility of his heart for Louisa's kindness. He led her into his mother's apartment; and thro' the veil of modest reserve, could not help flattering himself, that Louisa, at times, betrayed a joy on his return, and a sympathy in his sorrows, more animated than even that to which friendship gives birth.

The evening after Lord Hastings arrived, she received the following letter from Lady Charlotte :

To Miss Seymour.

"THE very unexpected death of the estimable Lord Granville gave my father and me unspeakable concern; assure his afflicted Lady of our most cordial sympathy with her in her distress. How happy is she in the cares of my amiable friend!—Ah, Louisa! if I mistake not, she will soon have a title to claim them, on the score of duty.

"Heavens, Louisa! what have I done?—I am so terrified and breathless, I can hardly tell you; Lord Leicester has just been here—popt upon me whilst finishing the last sentence—laid violent hands on all my scrupulosities—urged the necessity of his setting off immediately for——shire;—vowed he would not go without me;—ungenerously took advantage of my good humour;—made me swear—no, I never swear, but think and say just what he pleased.—And, to-morrow!—yes, Louisa, to-morrow, wind, tide, and my mind serving, I quit the bleak and barren shore of Maidenland, and embark on the sea of Uncertainty, for the continent of

Matrimony. As our course lies by the Cape of Good Hope, we have no certain compass to steer by ; especially as its variations of late have been many. We must therefore trust to the strength of our vessel.

“ The prosperous state of former adventures has induced us to explore foreign climes, in search, perhaps, of imaginary treasures. I confess I have many fears ; I know Terra Incognita is a dangerous region to wander in ; and we have seen many settlements made there at great expense, that have proved hardly worth keeping. No more the soothing breezes of flattery shall waft my barge and swell my sails !

“ Pray for me, Louisa, that I may be preserved from the shelves and quicksands of pride and jealousy, that I may neither split on the rocks of imprudence, be lashed by the waves of censure, nor chilled with the cold blasts of indifference ; that I may never be tempted by my enemies to traffic in contraband goods ; but exchanging largely in the article affection, in lieu of gentle offices, I may have frequent returns of gratitude and love ; that without crowding my sails, or expecting to reach the Happy Islands, while tost on the waves of Time, I may suffer its tide to convey me gently into the quiet haven of Content.

“ You have long suspected a change in my sentiments, and a rival in my heart. I will not pretend to deny the fact : they have, indeed, undergone a total revolution, as you must suppose, when, after so many professions of never-ending friendship, I am going, for the sake of a newer favourite, to

bid you for ever adieu ; and assure you that this is the very last letter you will receive from

CHARLOTTE VILLIERS."

To Lady Charlotte Leister.

"MADAM,

"HAD I been disposed to doubt the report of your marriage, and loss of my late amiable friend, Lady Charlotte Villiers, in the gulph of matrimony, the altered style of your last letter would have furnished incontestible proof of both ; and of your resolution, agreeably to the practice of all ladies, of squeezing every amicable attachment to death in your wedding-ring.

"Permit me, Madam, in regard of our former friendship, to wish you all that happiness which a state of subjection can admit of. You have formed fetters for yourself ; and, however irksome or intolerable the bondage, you must now for life submit to wear them : that they may sit easier on you than on many of your cotemporaries is my sincere wish ; and that, however galled by them, you may never imprudently attempt to shake them off, my serious advice. But to change the metaphor—tired of the future limited sphere of your activity (but ill calculated for a belle of your magnitude) impelled by the centrifugal force of matrimonial authority, and attracted by the influences of gaiety and splendour, should you at length incline to fly off at a tangent, then heaven pity you !—for, however fond of liberty, you must absolutely submit to be ruled, impelled, and directed by superior power, else you will infallibly be swallowed up by the vortex of law,

and at last suffer a total eclipse. Then, though you may continue to exist, you can no longer hope to shine, nor be, as now, the brightest star of all our lower hemisphere.

"As my learning has not seen the light these ten years, no wonder if it requires rubbing up.

"Let me quit this unnatural jargon, the labour of the head, and address you as usual in the flowing language of the heart. I hope soon to offer Lord Leicester the same good-wishes. Assure yourself then, my dear Lady Charlotte, that amongst all the numerous circle of your friends, you have not one more sincere and affectionate, or who more cordially shares in your present happiness, and ardently prays for its continuance, than

Your's,

With inviolable attachment,

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

During a week, that Lord Hastings and Miss Seymour hardly ever quitted Lady Granville's apartment, in spite of sincere regret for one parent, and anxious solicitude about the other, Lord Hastings tasted a satisfaction so pleasant, as often banished every inquietude from his mind. The placid hours they now spent together, recalled the memory of those which he esteemed the most valuable of his life; and though unable to account for Grammont's letter, which first made him unhappy, he saw, with real pleasure, that Louisa was no longer so, and shared in her restored tranquillity. She often seemed pensive, but never gloomy; and though her manner to him was reserved, it was the reserve of good-breeding, rather than indifference.

To Mr. Beaufort.

"MY heart feels, and gratefully acknowledges, the share you take in my sorrow, on account of the loss of the worthiest of friends, and most indulgent of fathers. I have hardly yet had leisure to feel the weight of my misfortune : my affectionate and afflicted mother demands my constant care. But oh, Beaufort ! when I retire to my apartment, and recal the idea of my revered parent, a crowd of tender recollections press on my soul, and almost overwhelm it with sorrow !—Be it our care who survive, by treading in his steps, to repair, in some measure, the injury society has sustained, by the loss of so respectable and valuable a member.

"I found my mother in a very weak state of health and spirits. Louisa, the amiable, the enchanting Louisa, is, if possible, more beautiful, more engaging than ever. That air of sober sadness which the late melancholy incident has impressed on her features, gives them an expression of tenderness which melts the very soul. Mine is still held in painful suspense ; still am I tortured with those perplexing doubts and fears, to which it gives rise.

"Sometimes I fondly flatter myself, that through the timid and modest reserve of the most amiable of women, I can see some sparks of that peculiar tenderness, with which I ardently wish to inspire her. O, Beaufort ! at these moments, my heart throbs with unutterable transport !—At other times there is a caution, a timidity, a restraint in her manner, that blasts every bud of hope, and overwhelms me with dejecting melancholy !

"A thousand times a day, I resolve to speak my sentiments to Louisa, and, if possible, discover her's.

But the fear of offending, the dread of disgusting, the apprehension of losing her friendship, by soliciting her love, still withholds me.

"I met with an incident to-day which has strangely perplexed me. On riding slowly down the lane that leads to the Castle, I saw a clean, decent looking woman, standing at the door of a cottage, with an infant in her arms, whose features so strongly resembled the unhappy Talbot, that I had the curiosity to stop my horse, and inquire to whom the child belonged. The woman looked surprised at the question, and, upon my repeating it, "Indeed, please your honour," said she, "that is more than I can tell; but I'm sure, whoever my little Sally belongs to, need not be ashamed to own her, for your honour will not see a stouter child in a summer's day; but for that matter, she is cared for by the best gentry in all the country, though I say it that should not."—My first suspicion was now confirmed; but what was my astonishment, when she thus proceeded: "Mayhap, your honour is agoing to the Castle? If so, you will see there the best friend my poor baby has in this world." "How, nurse," demanded I, "is it Lady Granville that befriends your child so much?"—"No, no, Sir," replied she; "I believe as how Lady Granville is a very good lady, and very kind to the poor; but it is young Miss Seymour, an' please you, that is so kind to me and my sweet little puppet."—The arrival of her husband and some gossips, put an end to this curious dialogue.

"To find a child of Talbot here, deserted and disowned, is by no means surprising; but how Miss Seymour should be particularly interested in the

care of such a child, is an enigma I cannot unriddle.—I fancy, however, upon further acquaintance, I may prevail on honest nurse to speak out. If she be enjoined secrecy, I should detest myself, could I bribe her to betray her trust; but if prudence alone occasions her caution, that watchful dame may be caught napping, and nurse open her lips at the sight of all-prevailing gold.—Adieu.

I am, in much sincerity, your's,

GRANVILLE."

To Miss Seymour.

"IT is with much truth I have formerly affirmed, that when we consider the shortness of human life, Louisa, resignation scarce seems a virtue. Instead of looking back with criminal and unavailing sorrow, on account of those gone before us, we ought to look forward and rejoice, because we are so soon to follow.—Yet a few years, and the sorrowful shall rest in silence with them they deplore; yet a few years, and all the griefs, and cares, and inquietudes, that disturb the short hour of life, and poison its enjoyments, shall be as nothing!

"Again they have brought me here, to try the effects of my native air, in restoring an exhausted and feeble constitution. But my disease is seated in my heart, and is without remedy!

"Let not this afflict my gentle friend; let it rather bring her comfort, to hear that the hour of my release is fast approaching, and that I am about to receive my reward, before bearing the burden and

heat of the day.—We have been, long separated from each other : Where is the difference, Louisa, whether we are divided by seas and mountains—or by the grave ?—Yes, my loved friend, there is a great, an essential difference.—Whilst separated by distance, we are continually harrassed with fear and anxiety, on account of each other ; but no sooner does the grave receive those we love, than all our restless inquietudes end.

“ In proportion as earth and its concerns recede from view, the grand, the solemn scenes on which we are about to enter, come forward to cheer and support the mind under the decays of nature. Let these have due influence on your's, should Heaven see good to remove from you the friend you have long loved ; and having improved to our advancement in piety and virtue on earth, the most tender and lasting attachment, let us confide in our beneficent Creator, that he will admit us to perfect, in the society of the blessed, a friendship which here is liable to be impaired, may be interrupted, and must one day suffer dissolution.

“ We are all prone, Louisa, to forget our present is a state of discipline, and regard the blessings we possess, not as the gifts of a bountiful Benefactor, which he is at liberty to resume at pleasure, but as an inheritance to which we have an indefeasible right. It is necessary that we should frequently be reminded of our absolute dependence on God, and be brought back to him, by feeling that all besides is vain, unsatisfying, and evanescent.

“ No one can properly assent to this truth, that has never lost a friend. That stroke, which loosens our dearest tie to earth, forms also, as it were, new

attractions for us in Heaven. Thither, my beloved friend, let us direct the current of our heart's best affections: There alone, the immortal desires of the soul will find suitable and permanent objects.

"Adieu, dearest Louisa, adieu. If we meet no more here, we shall hereafter.

ADELAÏDE DE ST. CROIX."

The grief this letter occasioned in the gentle heart of Louisa was too great not to make a correspondent impression on her features. This was immediately discovered by Lord Hastings, who anxiously inquired the cause; and, by the lively interest he took in her sorrow, insensibly lessened its violence. It supplied him also with many pretences for conversing with Louisa alone (who wished to conceal every depressing circumstance from Lady Granville), and gave room for such melting expressions of pity, as bore a near resemblance to expressions of love.

One morning, after a very restless night, Lady Granville, feeling herself drowsy, desired Lord Hastings to ride out, as the weather was remarkably fine, and leave her to the care of Louisa, "who, I know," said she, with a look of complacency, "prefers my ease to her own, and will kindly read me to sleep." This proposal was readily embraced by Miss Seymour; but Lord Hastings expressed great reluctance to leaving his mother. In reality, though there never was a more attentive or affectionate son, the presence and conversation of Miss Seymour were now become so essential to his enjoyment, that he could find no pleasure in any amusement in which she did not partake.

He was scarcely gone, when Lady Granville expressed great anxiety to know what horse he rode ; and on being informed that it was one he had lately purchased, grew extremely uneasy, telling Louisa, that though he had carefully concealed it from her, she had learnt, by accident, that this new favourite was very easily startled, and had actually thrown Lord Hastings some time ago. Louisa said every thing to quiet the fears of his anxious mother, and continued to read, till she perceived she had dropped asleep. Her apprehensions were not so easily lulled : She stole softly down to the garden, and, crossing a small paddock adjoining to it, walked slowly up the lane, from whence she had a view of the high road. She had not continued her walk many minutes, when she discovered two men on horseback at a distance ; and supposing them to be Lord Hastings and his servant, turned hastily back, to regain the paddock before he should observe her. It was too late, however, to effect her purpose ;—on entering the lane, Lord Hastings instantly discovered her ; and alarmed on seeing her there alone, without her hat and cloak, clapped spurs to his horse, and reached the paddock at the very moment she arrived there. The flutter of her spirits gave such a tremor to her hand, that she made a considerable noise in opening the gate ; which startling the horse, made him spring to the opposite side of the road—and, in attempting to save himself from falling, Lord Hastings sprained his arm in so violent a manner, that it was with difficulty he could dismount.

After charging the servant to take no notice of this accident at the Castle, and sending him away with the horses, he followed Louisa into the paddock, who stood pale and trembling, supporting

herself against a tree.—She eagerly inquired after his arm, and expressed the sincerest regret, on account of having been the cause of his accident :—“ For heaven’s sake, my Lord,” said she, “ let me intreat you never again to mount that horse, which has already almost cost you your life.”—Taking hold of her hand, which he kissed with a look of grateful acknowledgment, he expressed much surprise at her knowledge of the circumstance of his former danger, as well as at her walking in the lane in that dress, without any attendant. In a moment, her face and neck were covered with blushes : the impropriety of this circumstance, which strongly betrayed the anxious and disturbed state of her mind, had never once occurred to her. She paused—she hesitated—and was utterly at a loss how to reply. Lord Hastings perceived her embarrassment ; and, pressing her hand to his throbbing bosom,—“ Why—why, dearest Miss Seymour,” said he, with a look that pierced her to the soul, “ should you be so concerned about preserving a life which is of so little value to the possessor ?”—“ Surely, my Lord,” replied she, “ you cannot mean what you say ? You must know that your life is of value to all who——” The earnestness with which Lord Hastings gazed on Louisa whilst she spoke, so greatly disconcerted her, that she stopped short, afraid that she had already said too much. “ Ah ! Miss Seymour,” said he, in a tender and softened voice, “ could I flatter myself that my life was of consequence to *me*, I would then know how much to value it.”—Louisa’s perplexity and confusion increased so much, that she turned towards the house, and muttering something about Lady Granville’s being alone, left Lord Hastings, without knowing what she did.

He stood some minutes, fixed to the spot : He repeated every word Louisa had uttered—he reflected on the circumstance of her walking out alone towards the road, after having heard of his danger—and above all, on the tender sollicitude she shewed for his safety ; and then wondered at his own blindness to so many proofs of her preference—and presently, reflecting on her former insensibility to so many marks of his,...on the letter of Grammont, and consequent depression of her spirits, with that diffidence which ever accompanies genuine and respectful love,—he attributed all that had passed, to the gentle and compassionate temper of Louisa, whose heart, he still feared, was insensible to the ardent affection of his.

He had bewildered himself so long with these various conjectures, that he appeared quite absent on entering Lady Granville's apartment ; who, without knowing what had passed, conjured him never again to ride the horse above-mentioned, and added, “ though you kindly concealed the accident from me, I was telling Louisa, just after you left us, that I was not ignorant of the danger you had incurred, by riding this unruly favourite of your's.” Lord Hastings turned his eyes on Louisa, who was overwhelmed with confusion at this unexpected piece of information ; and which was rather increased by his replying, “ I should indeed be the most ungrateful of human beings, could I knowingly give one moment's pain to those who so kindly interest themselves in my safety.”

As it was evident Miss Seymour had made no mention of his late accident, he chose likewise to be silent on the subject. A thousand little attentive

cares on the part of Louisa, shewed that it had made a deep impression on her mind. The pain he felt from the arm, which, for several days, he could not use, it was not always in his power to conceal; and the restraint imposed on Louisa, by the presence of Lady Granville, only redoubled the earnestness of her inquiries, and tenderness of her sympathy, when, for a moment, she found an opportunity of seeing him alone.

The conversation of two amiable young people, in whom her heart took the most tender interest, insensibly dissipated the gloom, with which the death of Lord Granville at first overwhelmed his affectionate wife: And though Lord Hastings received, with exquisite delight, the unguarded expressions of compassion, under which were concealed the tender, artless effusions of love, he did not chouse, by too animated returns of gratitude for her kindness, to alarm the delicacy of Louisa, or increase her caution with respect to those enchanting proofs of her tenderness, of which his glowing heart felt the full value.

One day Lady Granville proposed trying to walk in the garden, for the benefit of air and exercise. This, with the help of Louisa and her son, she accomplished with tolerable ease; and, after having rested some time in the pavilion, felt her spirits so revived with the beautiful scene around her, that she wandered down the field, at the bottom of the garden. Just as they had seated themselves on the bench, they observed a woman, with a lovely infant in her arms, both remarkably clean, passing through the field; who, on seeing them, quickened her pace, as if afraid of being challenged. Lady

Granville, who was extremely fond of children, called her: the poor woman approached; and, on seeing Miss Seymour, looked extremely disconcerted. "I humbly beg your La'ship's pardon," said she (addressing herself to Louisa, without minding Lady Granville, who was wholly engaged admiring the beauty of the child;): "I confess I ought not to have presumed for to come so near the Castle, after your La'ship's express orders to the contrary; but this being a holiday at Farmer Gibbon's, we were all gossiping there, and I waited to try and bring my husband along with me; for John, poor man, does like Farmer Gibbon's ale with all his heart, that he does. An' so, please your La'ship, being rather late abroad with my little Sally, I was taking the nearest way home; but if your La'ship is angry with me, I will never do so no more."

During this harangue, the little infant, casting its eyes on Louisa, stared with joy, and stretched out its arms to embrace her, which greatly increased her confusion. "I protest, Madam," said nurse, with tears of joy in her eyes, "the little hussey knows your La'ship; but no wonder."—Lord Hastings took the child from her, to reach in to Louisa, and kissing it, placed it on his knee: "I fear, nurse," said he, "I shall make but an awkward figure; but if I am not mistaken, here is a lady," turning to Louisa, "better accustomed to the office."—The infant clasped her round the neck; and though its innocent caresses, at any other time, would have given her delight, at present they only heightened her blushes, and increased her embarrassment.—"Why, nurse," said Lady Granville, "you and Miss Seymour seem to be old acquaintances?"—"Ah, Mad-

am," replied the simple cottager, "if I durst speak I could tell your La'ship such stories about her goodness! She is the very best friend I have in the world, God bless her!"—"Pray is this your own child?" demanded Lady Granville—"No, please your La'ship; but," with a very significant shrug, "your La'ship must ask me no more questions."

Here Louisa arose, and, under pretence of care about the child's health, dismissed nurse and her little charge.—It is impossible to describe the confusion and agitation into which she was thrown, by this unexpected rencounter. No sooner was she seated, than Lady Granville said, with a smile, "My dear Louisa, you did not use to conceal any of your pleasures from me;—pray, when did you come possessed of this little treasure?"—"Indeed, Madam," answered Louisa, with a deep sigh, "if the knowledge of this child could have yielded you any satisfaction, you should long since have been made acquainted with it. But it is a poor unfortunate babe who has no one to care for it."—"Whatever may have been its misfortunes," said Lord Hastings, "it surely may now be accounted happy, in having so kind, so compassionate a protectress."

By this time they reached the Castle, and Lady Granville perceiving, from the embarrassment of Louisa's manner, that there was something mysterious in the history of the child, which she did not wish to communicate, allowed the subject to drop.

Next day, however, on their being left alone, she gave Lady Granville a full account of the affair, and ended her narrative with saying, "I should certainly have intreated your Ladyship's protection for this helpless innocent, had I not known, that by

becoming an object of your attention, people would have been led to inquire into the circumstances of her birth, which both honour and humanity prompted me to conceal ; besides, obscurity is surely the most proper situation for one born under such unfortunate circumstances. I was often tempted to reveal the story of its unhappy mother, at a time when your Ladyship's humanity might have afforded her relief ; but the earnestness with which she conjured me to conceal her error from the world, withheld me, together with my being persuaded, that the best security for the future good conduct of such an unfortunate wanderer, is the conviction that it is still in their power, "not only to return to virtue, but to preserve reputation."

Lady Granville highly applauded Louisa's conduct in this whole affair ; and could not help expressing her admiration of so much prudence, displayed at so early an age.

Lord Hastings now felt his curiosity to know the history of the child, redoubled by the scene of the preceding evening ; accordingly he walked out early in the morning, and, on reaching the cottage, began to repeat the same questions he had formerly put to the nurse : "You tell me," says he, "that this child is none of your own ; but surely, nurse, you must know to whom it belongs ?"—"Indeed, that I don't," answered she, "and if I did, I durst not tell your honour, because the sweet young lady at the Castle brought it me nine months ago, and told me that its father was gone in foreign parts, and it had not one soul living to care for it :—but sure I am, the mother that bore her, could not love my little Sally better than she does ; for, if your

honour will believe me, when the little poppet grows and laughs in her arms; she weeps salt tears when she looks at it."—"But why don't you bring this sweet child to visit Miss Seymour at the Castle?" demanded Lord Hastings.—"Why, it does seem a little strange, to be sure, that so humble, and sweet, and good-natured a young lady should forbid me to bring the child to the Castle, when good Lady Granville seems so fond of her; and she is so handsome, that she might appear before the best lady in Christendom."—"Pray, when did you become acquainted with Miss Seymour?" said Lord Hastings.—"Oh, I shall remember the time as long as I live, and longer too, if I could," answered she: "It was, please your honour, when my poor dear Nancy, who is now in heaven, died, that Miss Seymour first met me, when I was walking in the field, and weeping beside a hut the child had raised with a few stones, and called it her drawing-room: The wind had thrown it down, and it was laying a heap of rubbish, and put me so in mind of my poor Nancy, that it had almost broke my heart. When I returned home, I was taken with the same fever; and would your honour believe it, that good angel—for if there's one in heaven, she is—came twice every day to see me, and gave me all the stuff the 'potecary sent me with her own hand, and brought me fruit, and gave me money to pay his bill, and every thing I wanted, till I got pure well again."

The countenance of Lord Hastings underwent many changes during the course of this conversation. Having given the good woman a guinea, and charged her to be kind to the child, he returned to the Castle; but his curiosity was rather increased than diminished by his interview with the nurse.

The moment he entered his mother's apartment, finding her alone, he introduced the subject of the child. She gave him a minute detail of all the circumstances Miss Seymour had related concerning the unfortunate Sally ; and he felt his admiration of her increased, by every new light in which they placed her exalted character.—His mother, who watched every look and word which expressed a passion she wished to confirm, joined cordially in the praises he a thousand times repeated, of the singular prudence and delicacy of the generous and noble-minded Louisa.

That evening Lady Granville remarked that Louisa looked very pale ; and the weather being remarkably fine, desired Lord Hastings to take her out to walk : “ You forget your own health, Louisa,” said she, “ in your concern about me ; but remember, my love,” she added, with a look of the most tender solicitude, “ that, next to that of Hastings, on your safety my future comfort depends.”

They passed through the garden, and wandered down the field which was fragrant with the new-mown hay. The stillness of the air, the serene face of the sky, and the wild notes of a thrush from the neighboring wood, were perfectly in harmony with their feelings.—When they reached the bench, the sun being very hot, and Louisa looking tired, Lord Hastings requested her to sit down. They did so ; when suddenly recollecting the circumstance of finding the letter there, he became silent and thoughtful—he sighed heavily, cast his eyes on the ground, and seemed buried in his own reflections. Louisa, whose soul vibrated to every emotion of his, soon caught the infectious melancholy.

Their mutual silence became every moment more embarrassing.—At last, looking up, and fixing his eyes on Louisa, with a respectful and timid air,—“O Miss Seymour,” said he, “may I presume to hope, from the present serenity of your mind, that all obstacles to your felicity are at last removed?”

The conscious heart of Louisa took alarm at the first word of this speech; she became pale as death, and trembled so violently, that Lord Hastings was obliged to support her in his arms. Afraid of her fainting, he hastily endeavoured to unloose her cloak, to give her air; but, in his agitation, caught hold at the same time of the string of pearls by which his picture was hung, and pulling the cloak away, the string broke, and the picture, together with the locket, fell to the ground. He stooped to take it up; but how inexpressible was his astonishment, on discovering that it was his own!—“Powerful Heaven!” cried he, “can I credit my senses!—Louisa, my adored Louisa! is it possible? Was it on this lifeless image I saw thee bestow thy precious tears?”—He had time for no more.—During a few moments the face and neck of Miss Seymour were covered with blushes; again her countenance became pale, her head dropped on his shoulder, and she continued, for several minutes, without sense or motion.

The situation of Lord Hastings almost equalled her own; but far other were his feelings, when he saw her return to life. He pressed her to his bosom, which throbbed with unutterable transport; and again fixing his eyes on her averted face,—“Tell me, Louisa,” said he, “O tell me, do I not dream? Dare I hope—can I believe that I am be—

ried "—“ Oh, Hastings!” she replied, “ how can you doubt it?”

The most tender, delightful, interesting conversation now ensued. The letter of Grammont, the schemes of Lord Granville, the embarrassing situation of Louisa, and the ill-grounded jealousies of Lord Hastings, led to such a variety of tender and affecting explanations, that these happy lovers forgot the hours; nor knew that they had spent more than two together, till they saw a servant coming down the field in search of them.

With the assistance of Lord Hastings's arm, Louisa reached the Castle; but her emotion was still so visible, that Lady Granville instantly observed it. “ Henry,” said she, “ you have certainly walked too far; Louisa looks quite exhausted—I will never again intrust you with my daughter.”—“ Indeed, my dearest mother,” said he, taking hold of her hand, which he pressed between his, “ you must bestow her on me yourself—you must intrust her to me for ever.”

Louisa was still so greatly agitated, that she was unable to listen to this explanation: She retired, therefore, into Lady Granville's dressing-room; whilst Lord Hastings repeated to her all that had passed. Could his happiness have admitted of any increase, it would have been augmented by the warmth and tenderness of his mother's approbation.

She arose, and, on entering the dressing-room, “ Now, now, my Louisa,” cried she, clasping her to her bosom, “ you are indeed my daughter!” Then joining her hand with that of Lord Hastings, who had followed her, “ May Heaven for ever bless my

children," said she, "and that God who made them virtuous, make them completely happy!"

The happiness of this amiable pair was now, indeed, as exquisite and unmixed as any which the most glowing imagination could represent. The late agitated state of their minds rendered the calm which now succeeded it, peculiarly delightful.— Their felicity, however, was chastened at times by their anxiety about Lady Granville, whose health had not yet recovered the dreadful shock it sustained by the death of her husband.

None more sincerely partook in their transport than the generous Lady Leicester, who was then at the Earl's seat in —shire; and whom Louisa immediately informed of the happy eclairecissement above-mentioned.

The day following, on Louisa's being longer absent from the dining-room than usual, Lord Hastings went in search of her to the garden; and, on entering the pavilion, which had been the scene of so many interesting interviews, was not a little startled on seeing Louisa sitting there, with a letter in her hand, almost drowned in tears. He inquired the cause of her sorrow, with tender and earnest solicitude: She gave him the letter; it was from Adelaide, and contained these words:

To Miss Seymour.

—"AT length, beloved friend of my heart, the solemn, awful hour approaches! This is the last letter you will ever receive from your Adelaide! Already my hand is so feeble, it can hardly direct my pen.

"I know how this will affect my gentle Louisa; I feel for the anguish my death will occasion you; yet something whispers me, your heart shall be soothed, your sorrows divided—and this hope gives consolation to mine.

"Waste not, dearest Louisa, those precious moments which shall never return, and which so many important duties demand, in excessive and unavailing sorrow. Too, too many of them have we spent, in fond, presumptuous schemes of unmingled felicity, which falls not to the lot of mortals.—Oh, my friend, vain alike are the pleasures that engross, and the cares that disquiet, the transient moments of our present existence!—At this awful crisis, what do all the concerns of time appear, in comparison with the hopes of *eternity*!

"My heart would say much, but my dim eyes and trembling hand refuse their aid.—To the God of love and goodness I fervently commend you; to that God who will not leave the soul of his servant, desolate and forlorn, to wander in the unseen world—nor the body to remain for ever a prisoner in the loathsome grave.

"Farewel, friend of my soul—best loved and latest remembered!—My Louisa, oh, farewel for ever!

ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX."

Lord Hastings was greatly affected with this letter. It touched some strings in his heart, that accorded to its pathetic language with a sadness and sensibility almost too exquisite to be borne. The sorrows of such hearts, however, are delightful; and whilst these fond lovers, these faithful friends,

mingled their sighs together, the bitterness of grief was insensibly converted into that sweet and tender sympathy, which gently agitates, without overwhelming the soul.

Lord Hastings pressed the hand of Louisa to his bosom, wiped away her tears, soothed her with love and tenderness, and encouraged her to hope, that from change of air, time, and other remedies, Adelaide might still recover. Reflecting, that the respect due to the memory of a revered parent must a while delay that event to which all his wishes were directed, he prevailed on Louisa, by the hope of once more beholding her friend; to join with him in requesting Lady Granville to make trial for a few months of the air of the continent. He knew that the novelty and variety of the objects she would meet with in this little tour, would necessarily divert her thoughts from the melancholy subject which constantly occupied them; and likewise serve to relieve Louisa from that awkward consciousness attending her present situation.

With much difficulty, Lady Granville was prevailed on to enter into a scheme, which called for an exertion to which her spirits were very unequal; but conscious of its propriety, and accustomed, from the singular benevolence of her heart, ever willingly to sacrifice her own feelings to the comfort or advantage of others, she strove at last to comply with the sollicitations of her children, and, in gratitude for their duteous care of her health, to do so with cheerfulness: "There is only one condition, Louisa," said she, "that can prevail on me to become a traveller at my age; and that is, that as soon as I am weary of France, you shall stand en-

gaged to find me a daughter ready to love, honour, and obey, the moment I return to England."——
 Louisa blushed ; and Lord Hastings, clasping his mother's hand, thanked her with his fine, intelligent eyes, for this kind hint.

To avoid observation, they set out with very few attendants, and reached Paris by slow and easy journies. Being properly accommodated in lodgings, in a retired village in the neighbourhood of Versailles, the very day after their arrival, leaving Lady Granville behind, Lord Hastings conducted the anxiously impatient Louisa to the Convent of St. Cire. She could not again enter these sacred walls, without feeling her heart swell with a confused variety of emotions. These were not lessened on hearing, that, a few hours after sending her last letter to her friend, the gentle Adelaide peacefully ended her innocent life.

Lord Hastings partook in her virtuous sorrow ; but whilst he did not venture to condemn, he gently endeavoured to calm and moderate her affliction:—How exquisitely soothing is that sympathy, which unites at once the ardour and delicacy of friendship with the matchless tenderness of love !

Whilst she sat down in the parlour, to compose her mind, and recover her scattered spirits, she received a message from the abbess, requesting to see her.

On entering her apartment, she presented her with a small box, which Adelaide bequeathed to her with her dying breath. Louisa received it with every mark of reverence for the beloved donor.—She requested to be shewn the spot where she was

buried; and having paid the tribute of gratitude and friendship to a friend endeared to her heart: by every virtue, she returned to Lord Hastings, who impatiently waited for her, and immediately conducted her back to Versailles.

Louisa retired to her apartment, to indulge, without witnesses, those tears which served to relieve her heart. She then addressed the following letter to Lady Leicester, whom she had promised to inform of the fate of Adelaide, as soon as she should be made acquainted with it.

To Lady Leicester.

—“ALREADY, my dear friend, that singular happiness, on the possession of which you so warmly congratulate me, has suffered a cruel interruption; already tears mingle with my joy!—Ah! with how much humility and moderation does it become man to enjoy that prosperity, which a thousand accidents are ever at hand to embitter!—which, however great, cannot be lasting—and which must, in this state of trial, be one day succeeded by that adversity, which, by contrast, it renders more severe.

“The kind, the generous Hastings, who prevents or indulges every wish of my heart, carried me to St. Ciro the very day after our arrival.—How shall I describe the variety of feelings, with which I once more entered that sacred abode of piety and peace!—My trembling apprehensions were soon exchanged for fatal certainty!

“I had a long conversation with the venerable abbess, who informed me, after expatiating on the exemplary virtues of the dear deceased, that she not

only quitted life with cheerful resignation, but triumph and joy !—With her dying lips she blessed me, bequeathed a little casket to me, as a memorial of her friendship, and bade those around tell me, “that though divided for a little, we should surely meet again.”

“I cannot help regretting my absence from this solemn, affecting scene. Yet, alas ! why should I regret it ? My affliction would only have rendered death more formidable—might have disturbed her heavenly composure, and clogged her ascending spirit.

“I resolved to visit all that now remained of the beautiful, amiable, admired Adelaide.—As I approached the lowly dwelling, “I go to meet my friend,” said I ; “but where are now the open arms, the smiling countenance, the throbbing heart that were wont to welcome me ?”——The lay-sister pointed out the humble, undistinguished spot, where the first of women reposes, and retired : “That faithful heart shall beat no more !—No more shall sorrow heave that clay-cold bosom !—The shower of spring shall return—but no leaf of her’s shall arise !—She is gone, she is gone for ever, and the place that once knew her, shall know her no more !”

“As I uttered this sentence, I was startled by something which moved the sod with which the grave was covered : It was her little dog Fidelle, the last gift of Grammont, on which she doated, and who had made itself a bed under the sod at the foot of her grave, which nothing could induce it to quit since the hour of her interment. The affectionate little animal knew me, and looked piteously in my face ; but immediately on perceiving

its mistress was not with me, laid down its head, and resumed its former posture.

"This little affecting circumstance quite overcame me.—My ever watchful, attentive Hastings, afraid that this scene might prove too severe a trial for my weak spirits, approached ; and giving me his arm, led me back in silence to the convent.

"I then retired, to visit her cell, that I might be more composed before returning to the parlour ; —Her chair, her bed, her books, surrounded me ! The very pen with which she had last addressed me, lay on her table !—How pathetic was the silent language in which they spoke to my sad soul !—There was a becoming stillness in the desolate dwelling, that gently harmonized my feelings and composed my mind:—I reflected with gratitude on the happiness our mutual friendship had supplied ; and blessed God, that from the hour of its commencement, we had never given each other a momentary pain, nor wounded the delicacy of each other's affection, by careless neglect or culpable ingratitude.

"And now, having recovered tolerable composure, I came back to the parlour, where Hastings impatiently waited for me ; and taking a last look, and breathing a last sigh to St. Cere, and the memory of its tranquil pleasures, returned to Lady Granville.

"On opening the little casket, I found it contained the picture of Grammont ; a beautiful landscape, supposed to be the scenery round the fort of —, where he died ; her crucifix and rosary ; and, what I hold as invaluable, a small manuscript, intitled,

—“Reflections of Adelaide de St. Croix, in the Convent of St. Clare.”

“These, my dear Lady Leicester, were all the treasures she possessed ; and these will be inestimable to me. I will keep from every eye this little hoard of grief ; and whenever I am in danger of forgetting myself, in too secure and presumptuous prosperity, I will contemplate these sacred relics ; and the virtues of Adelaide will reform her friend. Adieu—adieu.

LOUISA SEYMOUR.”

To the same.

—“YOU reproach me with being unkind to my beloved Hastings, and even ungrateful to Heaven, for suffering the death of Adelaide to cloud the very dawn of our happiness.—Ah, Lady Leicester, how little do you know of this heart, when you accuse it of coldness and ingratitude ! Believe me, I tremble to feel how strongly every affection of my soul is rivetted to one dear, deserving, engrossing object !

“The situation in which we now find ourselves, is perhaps the most delightful which the human imagination could paint. The late distressing events, have mingled all the softness of pity with the ardour of passion, and brought us insensibly to a degree of confidence and intimacy, which would scarce appear credible to any person acquainted with the situation of our minds a short month ago. But what need is there of caution or reserve, with a man who can read every sentiment of my soul ; who would die sooner than give me the slightest pain, and whose refined manners, exalted honour, and glowing affection, are a source of ever increasing delight !

"Oh, my friend, will it always be so? Will the heart of Hastings be ever and only mine?—Secure now in my boundless affection, will he not despise or neglect a conquest, which no more obstacles oppose, and of which he knows no power on earth will deprive him?—Ah! Lady Leister, should he ever be less kind, less gentle, less respectful!—I might support his neglect; but his contempt....O, Heaven, defend me from deserving it!—I must lay down my pen.

—"How differently, my dear Lady Leister, do we view the same object, whilst under the influence of passion and of reason?—I am so ashamed of the above, that I will do penance for my folly, by disclosing it without reserve to my friend.

"Just as I had finished the last sentence, Hastings sent to request me to walk, as his mother had retired to take a little rest in her own apartment: I really was unable to quit mine; and, for the first time in my life, begged to be excused. On inquiring of Patty how I was employed, the simple girl informed him; and added, out of her great affection, "I'm afraid, Sir, my mistress has received some bad news, for she is writing of letters, and seems in great affliction. I really wish your honour would step up stairs, and talk to her; for she forbade me to return, and I'm sure, Sir, none can comfort her, if you can't."—He entered the room, which greatly increased my agitation. He earnestly inquired the cause: I was silent; but on his urging to know, I tried to force a smile, and told him, that he must not so soon begin to exercise his authority. He clasped my hand; "Ah, Louisa," said he, "this is my time; let me then enjoy my short-lived power—hereafter, it will be your's to reign."

"To avoid the subject, I asked him to read to me. He took up a volume of Shakespeare, which lay on the table, and read the mournful soliloquy of the melancholy Jacques.—My spirits, exhausted by the little exertion I had just made, forsook me altogether. Regardless of the play, my thoughts retraced the sad fate of Grammont and Adelaide.—I fixed my eyes on Hastings—I recollected that ere long his would be closed by the inexorable hand of death—I even fancied he looked more languid and pale than usual.

"On looking up, he beheld me motionless as a statue, my head resting on my bosom, and my eyes streaming with tears: He flew to my assistance, pressed me to his bosom, and conjured me, as I valued his peace, to tell him the cause of this inexplicable distress. Unable to speak, I pointed to the letter I had been writing. He read it, and returning to me, strove to calm my agitated spirits with the most soothing, the most endearing tenderness: "Why, O why, my dearest Louisa," said he, "would you embitter our exquisite enjoyment, by anticipating melancholy events, and even impossible evils? for such I deem any change in our present sentiments for each other. We are not, my love, to expect either lasting or unmixed happiness on earth; but let us not deal ungratefully and disingenuously with Heaven, lest, by refusing to enjoy the blessings bestowed, they should be withdrawn from us. We do not, my best Louisa, expect to find each other perfect, or always the same: We cannot suppose that we shall meet, after an absence of a day, with the same glowing transports we experience when meeting, after many months have divided us;—the human mind could not long sustain such impetuous sensations.—But I am confident we shall ever feel for each

other that confirmed esteem, that mild complacency, that animated tenderness, that will insure the highest enjoyment of which our natures are capable."

"Ah, my friend, had you seen me at that moment, you would neither have thought me unkind nor ungrateful. I took hold of his hand, and forgetting that it was not the soothing accents of Adelaide to which I then listened, reclined my head on his bosom; then looking up to my best instructor, "Tell me, Hastings," said I, "will not this intoxicating affection bind us to that world we must soon leave, and render our separation altogether insupportable?"—He looked at me some moments: tears swelled into his eyes: then again folding me to his heart, "No, best and dearest of human beings," replied he, "the sacred affection that unites our souls, shall not bind us to the world, but teach us to rise above both its pleasures and its pains; and when that God who united us, shall see good a little while to divide us, he will enable the survivor patiently to support that life which can be no longer enjoyed."

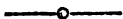
"O, my friend! the recollection of this deeply interesting conversation swells my heart almost to bursting! Never, never again shall your Louisa injure the sacred affection of her Hastings, by one anxiety or apprehension so unworthy of herself, so unjust to him. Never shall this breast harbour suspicion, or this brow be clouded with care; but harmony and peace, and smiling approbation, cheer every future hour of that life which shall be wholly devoted to make him happy."

"At your request, I send you a short extract from the manuscript of Adelaide. If it affects you as tenderly as it does me, you shall have a longer one hereafter."

"Lady Granville, unable to mix with society, or relish pleasure, already begins to talk of returning to England.—Three months are elapsed since the death of Lord Granville, and his son insists on the conditions stipulated for by his mother, immediately after the conclusion of the fourth!—My heart consents with pleasure to every wish of his; and I long as much for home and quietness, as my dear Lady Granville.

"One of the most agreeable of my future prospects, is that of confirming my esteem of Lord Leicester's character, by intimate acquaintance. Assure him and yourself of the respect and tender attachment of

LOUISA SEYMOUR."



REFLECTIONS OF ADELAIDE DE ST. CROIX, IN
THE CONVENT OF ST. CIRE.

"RETIRED to solitude and silence, I yield up my mind to reflection. Alas! what pleasure can mine afford—and to whom should I communicate them?

"Grammont! thou no longer sharest in the sentiments of the heart that loveth thee! Thou knowest them not—thou never more shalt know them!

"Oh, my disastred soul! too well hast thou proved the vanity, not only of the pride and pageantry of life, but even of its most blameless pleasures!—By forgetting the decree of heaven, which determined this a state of discipline, thou hast opposed the will of the Most High; by confining all thy enjoyment to the possession of one object, thou hast lost, with that, the power to enjoy; and by too eager a pursuit of happiness, hast banished her from this mortal habitation for ever!

"Return then, oh my disastred soul! return again to thy quiet rest: seek no more after lying vanities—indulge not useless sorrow—check vain and impious regret. Let

the shortness of life moderate thy affliction, and its evils animate thy desires after a better.

"Though I cannot always approve, neither ought I rashly to censure, the conduct of those around me. Alas ! should I condemn another, who know not that I am right, unless by the assistance of that very reason, which others possess in a far superior degree, who yet seem bewildered in the mazes of error ?

"O thou, who art the pure Fountain of truth, direct me in my earnest endeavours to discover it !—Impute not my errors to wilfulness, but weakness !—I look up to thee for the supplies necessary for life ; and I implore thy favour, which is better than life itself !

"Thou only seest the heart, and knowest that combination of circumstances, by which the judgment is misled, and the will influenced !—Thou only canst determine how far the errors of thy creatures are voluntary ; and to thee, Omniscient, it belongs to condemn or acquit !

"O, let no tie, strong as that thy Providence hath unloosed, again rivet my affections to life ! but grant that the disappointment of my earthly hopes may prove the means of my heavenly preparation !

"Once more I begin to taste of peace, and habit reconciles me to the absence of pleasure.—In humble expectation of future felicity, I strive to substitute present resignation, in the room of past enjoyment.

"I know that millions are born but to die. Alas ! that many more exist, only to abuse the privilege of existence ! I am assured, that infinite wisdom cannot err, nor infinite benevolence be unjust ; I bow, therefore, before the Most High, and adore that wisdom I cannot comprehend.

"Are we better judges of our proper sphere than Him who appointed it ; and will we presumptuously grasp at the prize, before we have reached the goal ? Is it for us to complain of our insignificance among the creatures of his power, whilst there breathes a human being whom we can assist by our advice, relieve by our alms, or encourage with our approbation ; to whom our pity can supply comfort, and our affection pleasure ?—Let us ask our own hearts if there are not many such, and blush for their ungrateful dissingenuity.

"O vain world ! that still promises, and still deceives ! —O most vain man, who still relies, and is still disappointed ! No more do I covet thy gay prospects—no more welcome thy deceitful hopes : they once looked bright and alluring, but the veil of death has dropt, and hidden them from my view for ever !—Farewel—a long, farewell—to thy pains and pleasures !—Soon, oh soon, Grammont, will I join thee ! Then, though obscure, forgotten, unlamented, a friend, perhaps, may visit my grave—perhaps a Louisa weep over it !"

To Lady Leicester.

"To-morrow, my dear Lady Leicester, we begin that journey, which, I trust, is to bring us in health and happiness to our native land.

"My time now is chiefly employed in concerting, with my dearest Hastings, that future plan of conduct, by pursuing which we shall insure self-approbation, if we cannot uninterrupted felicity. I have the best model before my eyes, in the character of Lady Granville ; with whom you are yet but half acquainted.

"You have formerly testified approbation of my portraits—let me attempt that of a person who unites that of a lady of fashion with a reasonable woman !

"Uninflaved by the prejudices, and uncorrupted by the practices of the world, Lady Granville maintains, in the midst of it, that rectitude of conduct, and simplicity of manners, which accords with the spirit of those doctrines she adorns, and the example of that Divine Master, whose steps she professes to follow.

" By maintaining an exemplary conduct in her family, and by her judicious choice of books bestowed on her domestics, and even read to them on proper occasions, she lays the best foundation for insuring their good conduct, by properly informing their minds.

" Her piety is without ostentation, and her zeal without bigotry. The complacency of her manners diffuses cheerfulness and good humour around her ; and from her, youth meets with indulgence, modesty with encouragement, and merit with approbation.

" How pleasing is it, my dear friend, to see people, possessed of rank and fortune, uniting with them, all those amiable and respectable qualities, which add lustre to titles, and dignity to birth !

" Were I inclined to be revengeful for your former ill-usage, I might, perhaps, with equal truth, assure you, " that a newer favourite has supplanted you in my heart, and that this is the very last letter you will receive from

LOUISA SEYMOUR."

To Lord Hastings.

" NO longer shall I dispute the pre-eminence of your sex—I see, I confess you are our superiors in every thing.

" Whilst women, weak and pusillanimous, are held enslaved by the prejudices of education, the bonds of principle, and the terrors of conscience, with what superior courage do men shake them off, and assert their native freedom !

"If we venture even on a slight pevarication, how does the moral flow of our blood cover our cheeks with blushes, and betray our offence?—But men, with exalted courage, break the bonds of confidence and good faith, and, nobly superior to remorse and shame, laugh at our credulity, and proclaim aloud their triumph.

"But not only must we yield to you, on account of your facility in making and breaking promises, but in the superior and peculiar art you possess, of forgetting them altogether.——Your last words when we parted, were, "I will write to you frequently."—How you have fulfilled your engagement, let Conscience answer.—O, cry you mercy! I believe he is not of your acquaintance, or else you lords indulge him with a perpetual vacation.

"Tell me truly, is it that, in plighting your faith to one woman, you consider yourselves as absolved from observing it with all besides? Or that you think the marriage vow so large, that it should swallow up all the lesser promises that preceded it?

"But I will no longer argue with one I so heartily despise, or rather pity, for his deplorable infatuation, in voluntarily renouncing what he once might have enjoyed—the inestimable privilege of my correspondence.

"Assure Louisa, she shall have no good wishes from me, on account of her approaching nuptials; she is possessed already of more happiness than she knows how to use. As for your's, it is too complete to admit of any addition.

"As we shall be with my father about the time of your arrival, I hope we shall see you before the

honey-moon expires.—Take comfort, Hastings ; —we have been married four months, and our's is not yet on the wane. Nay, from its mild and gentle aspect, I flatter myself it may continue to enlighten our hemisphere for life.—Adieu, *caro amico*.

CHARLOTTE LEISTER."

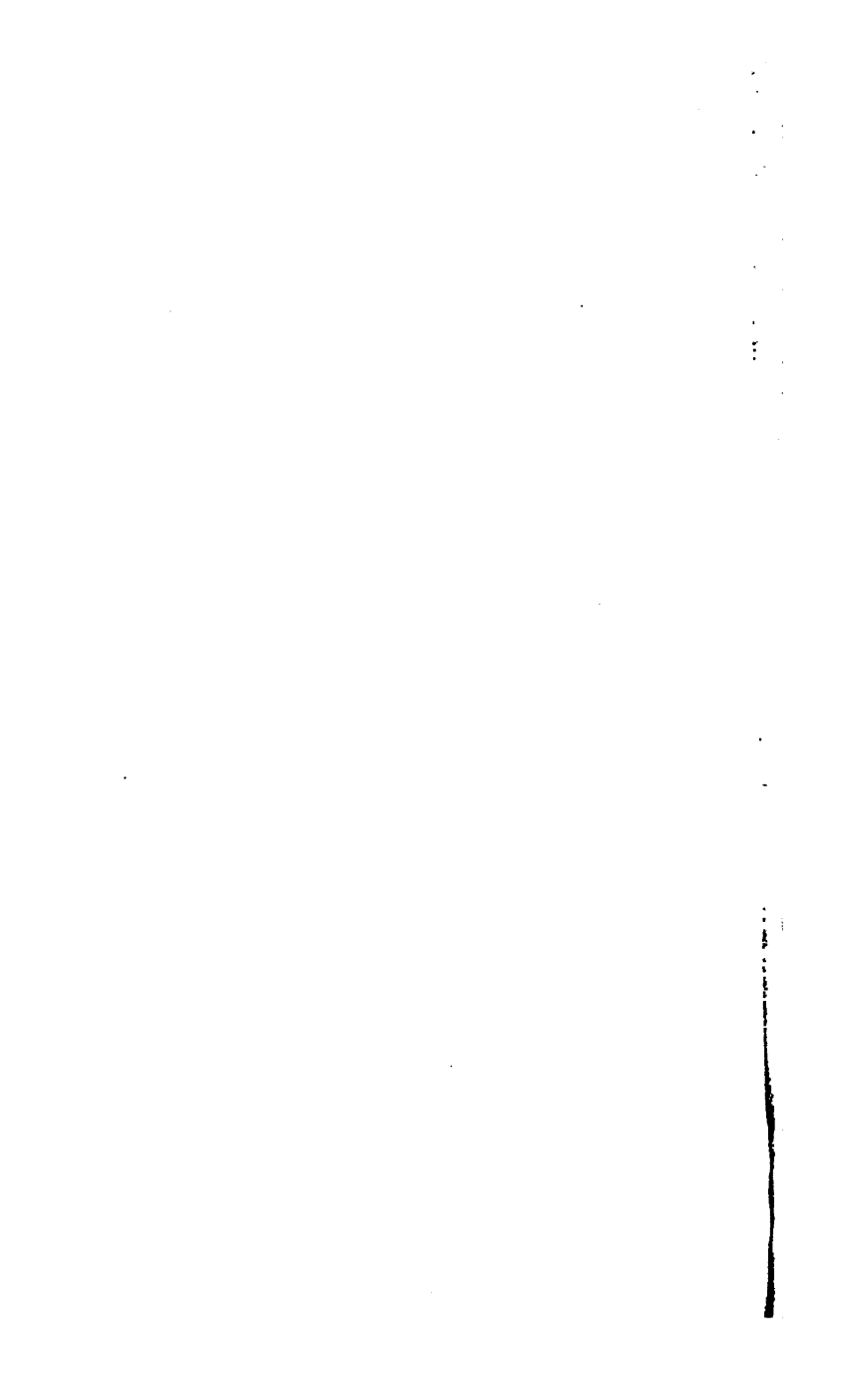
After an easy and pleasant journey, the travellers returned to their hospitable mansion ; where Dr. Melville waited to receive them, and next morning, in presence only of their principal domestics, joined the hands of Miss Seymour and Lord Hastings.

If the loss which Lady Granville had sustained of the best of husbands, could never be forgotten, it was at least alleviated by the duteous and tender cares of her children ; whose lasting happiness was strengthened and confirmed by every tie which heaven has annexed to the most sacred and endearing of all connections.

END.







SEP 13 1939